

異世界食堂

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4



ヒロ・姉

The Other World Dining Hall

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- Volume 4 -

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[fox's coffee time]

CHAPTER 61

NIKUMAN



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One day, Western Restaurant Nekoya, an old running restaurant set up in the corner of the shopping district, was quite busy as the “otherworld dining hall”.

First was morning. When the door connected to the other world at dawn, the restaurant was devoted to preparations.

After welcoming the recently hired “waitress”, the two people lightly cleaned the interior and prepared that day’s dishes after breakfast.

There were few customers coming at that point of time and time moved relatively slowly.

After a while, it quickly became busier at noon.

Customers came seeking food from all over the world.

It was different from weekdays, the orders for various dishes fluttered in the restaurant, the owner and Aletta went back and forth from the kitchen to handle all the customers.

After lunch time had passed, there was a fleeting moment of peace in the restaurant.

Customers would still come in this time period, but the aim of these customers was usually confectionaries, not meals.

In Nekoya, the various kinds of desserts were made by the bakery upstairs and they only served the desserts brought in the morning.

Of course, there were various desserts that the owner needed to make himself like parfaits, hot cakes, crepes and potato chips². However, the owner also needed to make the drinks offered with the desserts.





This time was mainly dedicated to the owner's and Aletta's lunch and break before evening preparations.

At evening, that was the restaurant's second busy time.

Various customers would come after finishing their work.

Also during this time, plenty of alcohols were served.

The purpose of the customers that came during this time period was often the

precious “otherworld liquor” that couldn’t be obtained at the other side.

They drank a lot of alcohol and ate lots of food with relish.

When the time had passed and night had fallen, the restaurant regained its calmness.

Apparently, it was normal for people of the other world to go to sleep as soon as the sun went down, so the customer traffic had decreased.

...On the other hand, there were customers who only came at night and those who came just before the closing time.

On a certain Saturday, the owner “welcomed” a little unusual customer early in the afternoon.

[Haruko-san. Excuse me for being a bother.]

After getting a notice of shopping district gathering at the back door of the restaurant, the owner received a bag while lowering his head to Haruko.

[Oh no, it’s fine. Around this time, otou-chan gave me plenty of spare time anyways.

Since I have not steamed it yet, make sure you do so before eating, okay?

...More than that, are you okay, Mako-kun? You’re working today at Nekoya right?]

Plump and rounded with work clothes for helping in the kitchen, Haruko frowned at him and asked a little anxiously.

As they were people of the same craft, they did not disturb each other’s work.

Such was the feeling.

Haruko was the wife of the owner of the Chinese Restaurant “Emi Ryu” that was located in the same shopping district.

That restaurant was the second restaurant that opened soon after the war ended, so it was around the same old running restaurant like Nekoya.

Because of that, they had close relationship with his predecessor and as the

grandchild of the previous owner, they had become friends in another meaning.

[No, I'm fine. Around this time, the customers are mainly ordering cakes.

I'm not so busy... and besides, recently I just hired a new waitress that was better than an unskillful student.]

Hearing Haruko's concern, the owner laughed while answering.

[Is that so. Then it's fine.]

Haruko conceded to the owner's words.

That soft smile couple with her thick, rounded body made her seem younger.

To that smile, the owner's expression hardened.

The owner's wounds, while quite old, would still bleed if they were touched.

[...For me, no matter what, I would still regard Mako-kun as my son.]

While looking at his expression and smiled sadly, Haruko spun her words.

If there was such an opportunity, the owner should have been the third generation owner of Nekoya instead of the second.

But that opportunity was lost and would never come back.

[Well then, it's time for me to go home.

...Also, please visit me sometime during summer. That child is quite lonely.]

She did not say it.

Even if she knew that those were curse words that bound the owner...

Sunset had passed and it was time to close the restaurant.

[Well then, I'll come again.]

—I'll come again.

[Yes. Please take care. Thank you for coming.]

[Thank you very much!]

A red woman gently hugging a still hot pot and a black girl who occupied the corner of the restaurant almost all day while she kept eating her favourite food.

The owner and Aletta saw off the last customers of the day and that day's business ended without delay.

[Fuu...]

After realizing that the work had ended, Aletta released her tension and sighed lightly.

[Yoshi, it's done. Only the last cleaning up remains. Just a little more, so do your best.]

[Yes!]

She replied naturally to him with a smile.

Her smile was full of vigor.

It was important for this work.

[Yoshi. Good reply... well then, I'll make a late night supper for it.]

[Waa, is that okay?]

To the owner's words, Aletta's face loosened.

It's been quite a time since her last break time for dinner.

While her stomach was quite empty, it was not that bad.

[Well, I guess. It's more than I can eat alone.]

To the innocently pleased Aletta, he twisted the rules a little bit.

Because the souvenirs he got earlier were based on the time when he was a high school body with huge appetite, so the owner got a bit more.

It would not be bad to please a hard-working employee with it.

[Well, I have to steam it first. Meanwhile, please clean the tables.]

[Yes!]

Aletta's voice while replying to the owner was more pleasant than usual.

While Aletta was cleaning the dining hall, the owner immediately prepared to steam the food.

[...Yoshi, this is it.]

At the moment the lid of the steamer was lifted, the steam containing the sweet smell of dough rose.

[Master's skill is as good as ever.]

Inhaling that smell, the owner said while smiling.

It was a familiar scent of childhood, that pure white of Emi Ryu.

Sold in winter for takeaways, office ladies and salarymen would go out to buy a couple of them for takeaways, the hidden gem of the Emi Ryu.

[As I thought, it's a nice time for Nikuman.]

The owner nodded while aligning several of them on a plate.

Then, after calling Aletta and washing their hands, they went to a table.

[This is... bread, right?]

Aletta asked after she saw the pure white mass on the plate.

The owner served a round and white bread with pointed tip as a snack.

(I wonder what kind of dish this is...?)

Aletta couldn't grasp its identity.

[Aa, this is Nikuman. There's meat inside. It's delicious.]

While saying so to the wondering Aletta, the owner picked up one of the five from the plate.

He peeled off the paper on the underside, tore the bun into half and ate it.



[...Un. Delicious.]

The minced meat contained plenty of meat juice that did not leak out, and its soft taste spread in his mouth.

(Un. This is the skill of a Chinese food chef. Well, I can't compete with my master.)

While the owner was proud that his skill was better compared to when he was a high school student, it still hadn't reached this level yet.

When that fact was confirmed again, he felt a little disappointed though a bit glad.

[...Jaa, let's eat.]

Looking at the owner, Aletta, whose stomach had growled a little, grabbed one.

The Nikuman emitted a comfortable heat.

It was not hot enough to burn, but that heat warmed Aletta's palms.

(Certainly... master tore it to two. This.)

Imitating the owner, Aletta also tore it in half with her hands.

At that moment, the sweet smell of steamed bread and the ingredients contained inside... the smell of steamed meat rose up.

With her appetite rising, Aletta swallowed her saliva and immediately bit it.

(A, it's soft...)

First of all, she noticed the softness when she bit the Nikuman.

Compared to the restaurant's bread, that softness resembled more of the white interior part of the bread.

The steam contained a faint sweet smell of wheat.

For Aletta, this delicious skin alone was already a feast.

However, the leading role of Nikuman was the meat contained inside.

Combined with the finely minced fat pork meat were green onions, chewy mushrooms and something pale yellow and crunchy that was finely chopped.

The ingredients were carefully and thoroughly mixed.

Either way, the taste of ingredients that were lightly seasoned was absorbed by the bread and had harmonious flavour.

[...This is delicious.]

Aletta who finished one bun in a blink of eye said her impression.

[Isn't it?]

The owner who usually did not praise his own cooking unusually agreed.

[Let's eat it quickly. It also matches well if you sprinkle a bit of vinegar and soy sauce or mustard on it after a bite.]

The owner added while smiling.

In the past, Haruko also said the same thing with a smile.

After that, Aletta was walking on a secluded street late at night.

(That Nikuman is really delicious...)

The winter in the Kingdom was cold as usual, but with the durable cloak she bought at a clothes shop and Nikuman warming her belly, she did not feel too cold.

Although it's winter, she's glad.

While feeling like that, she hurried home while bringing Minced Cutlet sandwich and a can of cookies requested by her employer and her employer's sister.



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1. Steamed bun with meat filling, usually pork. A Japanese version of Baozi I guess.
 2. ポテトチップス – it literally read potato chips. I don't know why the author included this in the list.

CHAPTER 62

POT AU FEU



He ran into a cabin that someone built and Arnold, a travelling adventurer, breathed out.

[Somehow, we're saved... hey, Eri. We're safe now.]

[Really? It's alright now?]

He assured his daughter that he was carrying on his back since sunset.

Before sunset, it was raining hard enough that they decided to wait for it to end under their cloth canopy set up in a tree's shade, however, it was night time when the rain's intensity became stronger.

The strong rain fell sideways so their canopy cloth became useless.

The momentum of the rain caused their bonfire to be snuffed out.

Arnold decided not to rely on their lantern as it would not prevent their body from chilling, but it was dangerous to move around at night while carrying his daughter.

Apparently his judgment was correct and Arnold managed to find this cabin not far away.

[...Eri, you should change your wet clothes for a dryer set.]

[...Un. I understand.]

After he made sure Eri changed her clothes, he also took off his clothes and took out a replacement set from his sturdy bag.

After he gently wiped his wet body and changed into dry clothing, Arnold was finally more comfortable and looked around the cabin.

[...Un. If it's this place, then there's no need to be worried about the rain.]

Thought its purpose was unknown, it seemed to be something that a member of nobility would build.

Even with this rain, it was built solidly to the extent it wouldn't leak.

On the other hand, it had a strong dusty smell.

Apparently, it had not been used for several years.

And if they stayed until the rain stopped, there's no complaint.

[...Well, there should be firewood here somewhere.]

Regrettably, there was no firewood though there was a fireplace, Arnold pulled Eri's hand.

[...Let's go, Eri. Let's explore this place.]

[...Un.]

Eri who finished changing her clothes nodded and held Arnold's hand.

It seemed that he was uneasy in this place when the only illumination came from their lantern.

He held her hand firmly.

(...Still, there's a possibility that this is a haunted house.)

Suddenly, he involuntarily insured that he brought holy water in his pocket.

Sometimes there were buildings called "haunted houses" if they were not used for several years.

...If it's just a ghost, it should be okay to endure its presence for several days. But if it's a lich, then they should immediately run away.

While he was a warrior, Arnold was slightly overloaded with his child.

[Yoshi, let's go.]

[Un.]

Arnold grasped Eri's hand firmly.

His wife passed away to desperately hold off monsters' invasion, so he must protect his daughter no matter what.

That's why he quitted adventurer's life and travelled with his daughter to return to his parents that ran a weapon shop in his hometown.

[Yoshi, let's start from here.]

He started on a black door with brass handle, which was exquisitely made for this cabin.

It was built to be locked, but there's no keyhole.

Arnold decided to take a risk and opened it.

'Chirinchirin', the sound resounded when the door opened.

[Uo!?] [Kyaa!?]

At that moment, they were blinded by the light with intensity of daylight.

[Oya, welcome. To come at this time, is there something wrong?]

[You're somewhat wet. Are you alright?]

Arnold's eyes were blinded.

A surprised voice of a middle-aged man was joined with the voice of a young woman.

(...Kuh, what should I do!?)

A strangely bright room and voices of strangers who suddenly appeared in the abandoned cabin.

To judge them as friends and greet them or treat them as enemies.

Arnold had to make that decision.

[Otou-san...]

She became anxious and gripped his hand tightly.

[They're wet so they should be quite cold... Aletta, bring me towels.]

[Yes! Just a minute.]

Both of them spoke warmly, and Arnold solidified his decision while holding his sword hanging from his waist.

If he looked closely, the girl who headed to the back was a demon and the man who was still there slightly lowered his head towards Arnold and Eri.

[Welcome to Western Restaurant Nekoya.]

[Ne, Nekoya...?]

Arnold tilted his head after hearing the unknown word.

[Yes. That is the name of the restaurant. For customers like you, this place is the "otherworld dining hall".

...The business hours had ended, but it seems that you have unexpected circumstances.

I can serve some employee food, would you like to eat something?]

Upon saying that, Arnold's clothing hem was tugged.

...'Kyuu', a belly growled.

They wiped their hair and bodies with strange woven cloths called towels that easily

sucked water and the two sat on an appropriate table while looking around.

[...It's somewhat amazing, this place.]

[Aa.]

Arnold obediently nodded to Eri who only knew the city where she was born.

It was a mysterious place even for Arnold who travelled here and there due to his job.

Chairs and tables that were carefully made and brightly polished, a room as warm as spring season that was as bright as daytime though there was no sign of fire like a fireplace in the room.

Well-made glass bottles and small potteries lining up on the tables.

According to the owner... Arnold's eyes were capturing the sight of another world.

(I wonder if that cabin itself is made for this purpose...)

Suddenly, he noticed the possibility.

The door to another world that appeared only once in 7 days.

Someone who knew of its existence, probably no longer in the world, built that cabin as a place to use the door.

Such an imagination crossed his head.

[Sorry to keep you waiting! I brought hot milk for you.]

While he was thinking such, one of his orders came.



Warmed cow's milk, well known to Arnold and Eri.

Arnold's and Eri's shoulders sagged as they smelled the scent of warm milk that filled the large pottery cups.

[As the food needs to be re-warmed, the master said that it needed a little more time.]

The girl named Aletta returned back to the kitchen.

[...Aa, how warm.]

[...Un, tasty.]

As soon as they grasped the cups' handles, they drank at the same time and exhaled.

The faintly sweet warm milk warmed their bodies.

The warmth of the fresh cow milk was currently the most delicious treat for them.

They silently drank the hot milk.

Every time they drank, their bodies became warmer; but at the same time, their bellies were empty since they only ate cold preserved food at noon.

[I wonder what kind of food that's going to be served.]

[Un...]

Eri nodded to Arnold's muttering.

Because of the lack of remaining ingredients, the owner told them that he could only make otherworld soup.

(Instead, the price of the food stated was a very fair price that's kind to my wallet.)

He did not know what kind of food that's coming, but it should be delicious since they're hungry.

As they slowly drank their hot milk, the long-awaited dish came.

[Thank you for waiting. Here's pot au feu.]

The owner placed the bowls in front of them.

[Waa... looks delicious.]

The deep and thick soup bowl was filled with large pieces of vegetables and fat sausages swimming in the soup.



Next to it were two silver spoons and two breads the size of a child's fist that emitted a warm aroma as if freshly baked.

[...Is this okay? It's more luxurious than I thought.]

After swallowing his spit, Arnold asked the owner.

This did not seem like an employee meal.

But the owner nodded and said.

[Ee, I made it with the remaining vegetables and sausages.]

A, the soup and bread are free to refill, so please eat as much as you want.

Well then, please enjoy.]

After saying so, the owner retreated to the back.

Only Arnold and Eri were left in the quiet room.

[...Well, let's eat.]

[Un...]

They started to eat the pot au feu.

(...This is an extraordinarily luxurious soup.)

After drinking a spoonful of soup, Arnold immediately noticed that it was exquisite.

He could note that there were vegetables like Baron's fruit and Caryute, pale green leafy vegetable, sliced sweet Oranie and thickly sliced mushrooms. The taste of meat could be attributed from the sausage and the taste of melted butter added to the soup made a finishing touch on the dish.

But the wonder of this soup was not the vegetables or the faint meat taste... he could feel it now.

But Arnold was surprised not just because of that.

(No way, it's spices...)

It was natural that there was the salt but this tingling taste... it's the taste of pepper.

As it was a trade item from the Western Continent, it's a valuable commodity in the Eastern Continent.

The amount used was small enough that the child Eri could eat it (she was silently eating her soup and bread), but the pepper gave the soup that was full of vegetables and meat a refreshing flavor.

(And the bread...)

He reached for the bread and took a bite.

It was different from everyday bread, a soft and slightly sweet bread.

It had crispy baked crust and soft cotton-like inside that was softer than any bread Arnold ever ate.

Even this bread alone made a delicious dish.

[Give me more! Bread and pot au feu!]

Without considering unnecessary things, Eri held out her empty dish towards Aletta.

[Yes! Please wait a moment.]

The empty dish was taken and when Arnold saw Aletta bring the second serving, he felt a little frustrated and resumed eating.

The vegetables were cooked to the extent that there was no crispiness left and bursting with soup every time he chewed though they still retained their shape.

The meat tightly packed into the intestine fills his mouth and had plenty of meat juice.

[Excuse me! Seconds for me too!]

Finally, after wiping the remaining soup with his bread, he asked for a second serving.

The father and daughter food competition continued until the evening had passed.

The next morning, Arnold and Eri continued travelling again while looking up towards the blue sky.

[It was delicious...]

[Aa...]

Remembering the breakfast of eggs with bread, Arnold involuntarily agrees.



After all, yesterday they borrowed a corner of the warm restaurant and slept.

And they ate the “morning meal” prepared by the owner before they left.

[I want to eat it again...]

[Aa, someday...]

Arnold nodded to Eri's words.

They would arrive at their hometown in five days.

After their journey was over, it would be the start of a modest life of a father and daughter.

(When my daughter gets bigger, maybe we can come again...)

He thought so while grasping Eri's hand as a memento of his wife.

Next time, they'll visit as proper customers during daytime.

Arnold walked slowly to match Eri's strides while thinking so.

While firmly looking forward.

CHAPTER 63

PORK CHOP



There was a small frontier country located in the high mountains, which was rare in the Eastern Continent.

Alberto, the third prince of the country, was heading to the “vegetable garden” while warily grasping his ancestral mithril sword.

In this country, there was a ruins called vegetable garden.

It was a historic ruins that elves created in ancient times to grow rare plants collected from all over the world.

There were millions of golems that were created to manage the garden, beasts that received the blessing of the land and bug monsters.

As this was a place where human beings were killed by plant monsters to be used as

fertilizer, it was the most dangerous zone in the country.

[Seriously, that old man... why is the entrance to the restaurant built in such a place...]

He vertically cut the plant monsters that extended their thick vines towards his neck and was now alone.

Alberto's aim was inside the garden.

A black door that he found when he dived into the garden to prove his courage to everyone.

After finding out what's behind the door, Alberto had been visiting it once in 7 days.

[Fuu... finally here.]

He stood in front of the black door located not far from the garden's entrance and opened it with familiar hand.

'Chirinchirin', while listening to the bell sound, he went through the door in a dignified way suitable for a royalty.

[Oi, old man! I'm here to eat again!]

[Ou, welcome.]

The old man replied Alberto in a casual manner.

His hair was completely white and his face was full of deep wrinkles, but he could sense that he was full of vitality.

[You look fine as usual... please find an appropriate seat and call me once you decide what to order. Here's the menu.]

[Ou.]

Alberto did not seem to care much of the old man's words and sat on an appropriate seat.

Although he was a royalty, as the third son, he would not succeed the throne.

There was no way to force people that lived in "another world" that was different from his world.

(Even so, the clientele of this restaurant is as mysterious as ever.)

Alberto gently looked at the customers who were eating their food.

They drank golden ale while discussing which food was more delicious, cutlet or croquette, and eating their food.



Middle aged warrior dressed in Western Continent clothes chewing bird's meat dish

and white “rice”.



A big knight wearing frayed clothes that showed that it was originally pretty luxurious eating food with brown sauce.



A wealthy merchant who wound up noodle dish stained in red with a fork and carried it to his mouth.



A lizardman whose facial expression could not be read silently eating a gigantic egg dish with silver spoon.



A beautiful high priestess of the Light Goddess who drank a cup of what seemed to be water. However, as far as Alberto knew, it was a delicious but strong liquor named "Gin".



On the table next to her, an old female dwarf drank liquor with fruit deliciously soaked in it that suggested that it originated from the Western Continent.



What is delicious, a group of adventurers who appeared for a party ordered a lot of food and alcohols...

(Recently the number of customers has increased...)

When Alberto first visited this restaurant, it was quieter.

However, the number of customers that came from here and there had increased and became like now.

[Well, let's order.]

All of the customers ate their food deliciously.

Alberto's belly was begging for food after seeing all the food.

[Oi, old man! I want to order.]

[Okay... well, what do you want to order?]

After calling the old man, Alberto pointed at the menu.

[Umu. Give me pork chop with white bread and soup.]

That food was Alberto's favourite food.

It was a meat dish with red sauce created using "Marmette" that was only found at Alberto's country.

After a while, his order was brought to him.

[Thank you for waiting. Here' your order of pork chop.]



With a polite tone, the old man placed the dish served on black iron plate in front of Alberto.

On the middle of the iron plate, the fleshy fat pork meat with plenty of red sauce sizzled and emanated an appetizing scent.

[Well then, please enjoy.]

[Umu.]

While listening to the old man's words, Alberto picked up a pair of silvery knife and fork.

(First is meat...)

Alberto decided to eat the meat first, postponing eating the vegetables arranged on the plate as the meat's decoration.

He pierced the meat with a fork and sliced it with his knife.

Even though the pork meat was thick, it was so soft and tender that it was easily cut with the knife.

He cut the part of meat with fat attached into a large piece... and ate it.

(...Umu. No matter how many times I eat this, the otherworld pork is really delicious.)

He nodded while feeling satisfied with its taste.

Good meat without odor and unnecessary fat thrown away.

The sweetness of the meat fat showed that it the meat of the most fattened pig butchered in autumn.

...During the long winter, it was a taste that could not be obtained as pigs were thin.

And the sauce used for seasoning the meat complimented the taste.

The sour and refreshing sauce made from a variety of vegetables and vinegar suited the strong greasy pork.

(It's surprising that the otherworld could use Marmette like this.)

And the main character of this sauce was Marmette.

Red vegetables grown only in Alberto's country after his ancestors found it in the vegetable garden.

The sweet and sour taste of ripe Marmette was blended into the sauce that was suitable for the meat dish.

This combination of meat and sauce was a treat that could only be obtained here even for Alberto that was a prince of a small country.

(Well, let's start on the other things...)

After he ate half of the meat, he started on his vegetables.

The vegetables of the otherworld were fried in high quality oil and lightly salted. They still retained their firmness while being hot.

Cooked Caryute that was soft to its core had sweetness that was different from fruits that had acidic taste.

(Well, next is...)

While biting the stalk like green bean, he used "seasonings".

He slathered the Marmette sauce used on the meat to the vegetables before eating.

(Umu, it's delicious.)

The sour sauce went well with the lightly seasoned vegetables.

It was delicious as it was, but it was different with the sauce.

After he ate to a certain extent, he finally ate his bread.

The soft and sweet bread was dipped into the milk soup with yellow grains.



The bread soaked up plenty of soup that dribbled out in his mouth.

[Oi, old man. I want more bread.]

[Okay.]

That bread was too small for Alberto and disappeared to his stomach in a blink of eye.

(Yoshi... now it's starting.)

With the new freshly baked bread, Alberto started on the main dish.

He sliced the bread and the meat.

He cut the meat a little bit and sliced the bread into half.

He sandwiched the meat with the bread and took a bite.



His face unintentionally loosened when he tasted the combination of meat and bread.
(I have to thank that old man.)

At this moment, Alberto was satisfied with the trick taught to him by the owner.

The meat dish of this restaurant was delicious on its own, but it was more delicious when eaten with bread.

[Oi, old man! More bread again!]

The bread quickly disappeared into his stomach and his voice reverberated in the restaurant.

[Fuu... I'm full.]

Alberto wiped the sauce left on the plate with his bread and drank an otherworld black tea named coffee with plenty of sugar before sighing satisfactorily.

Today as well, he ate a lot, so he didn't want to move for a while.

He was comfortable with this relaxed feeling until the next time he got hungry.

[Seriously, he should make the door in a more convenient place...]

To this wonderful taste, Alberto felt that it was regretful.

When he left the restaurant, he had to be careful until he left the vegetable garden.

That's why, until he felt motivated again, he would relax here with his full belly.

TN: For those who doesn't know, meat (especially game meat) are best when it's butchered at autumn. They ate a lot to stock up for winter and as such are full of fat. Boar meat is an example as they were known to have sweeter fat than usual during autumn due to all the nuts, edible roots and mushrooms they ate so they're really delicious as long as their meat is properly treated and has no game-y odor.

CHAPTER 64

STRAWBERRY YOGURT MOUSSE



She was lost.

Anna felt lost while tracing the elegant characters written on the slippery surface of the book.

(Which one should I choose...)

[U~n, I don't know what to choose...]

[Every time, I'm torn... it's definitely a chocolate type.]

People on the same table also suffered the same way when they looked at the book.

Around this point, it was a large difference from their leader who always stubbornly asked for pound cake.

It had been around a year since the first time Anna went to this otherworld restaurant.

A year ago, Celestine, who served the Goddess of light, received an evaluation of a high priest that could aim as a pope. She then led influential convents in this land that were supposed to be her disciples.

That number was three people.

With the exception of Celestine, Carlotta was the number one genius in the temple that subdued a considerable number of undeads convening in the center several years ago.

Julianne who had blood ties with the nobles of the Kingdom knew not only the best "luxuries" that existed in the Eastern Continent but also the sense of common people.

And then, Anna.

These three people.

(Un... let's choose this this time. I have never eaten this before.)

After agonizing for a while, Anna chose an unknown confection made using a fruit that she liked.

A dessert with a similar description to pudding using a spring fruit named "strawberries".

She chose it because Anna was aware that all confections of this restaurant were delicious... but she was aware why she chose it.

Anna was a superb priestess that had not reached twenty years of age yet.

On the other hand, her talent in the religion was only "decent".

Although her magical power was certainly strong, her skill and mastery of it was not much and her sword skill had never been praised.

Her faith skill and swordsmanship that she gained was a far cry from Carlotta's skill as a crusader that punished evil spirits, even more so compared to Celestine.

Her ability as a priestess was on the upper level in the convent, but there were other priestesses that were above her.

Also, her knowledge was not much.

Anna did not even know the names or faces of her parents.

She did not know whether they were lower aristocrats or nobles, but she was not blessed with parents.

Anna's parents who decided that it was difficult to raise Anna gave her away to the convent not long after she was born.

Because of such life, Anna only knew the narrow world of the convent and religion.

She did not have the wide knowledge and connections like Julianne who was born and raised in the Kingdom until adulthood and was gorgeous at social occasions and the society.

So why was Anna chosen by Celestine for the honorable work to reproduce the otherworld's confectionaries?

The reason was that she was a "replacement child".

Yes, even if her parents were humans, as a half-elf, she could live longer than anyone else.

She was expected to live for a long time and able to accurately convey the knowledge about otherworld.

In the present world where human beings were the center of the world, replacement children born from human parents had no place.

Humans were cold to half-elves that caused the collapse of the old Kingdom, which was the first human country. As such, they were repelled from society.

Their youth that was comparable to a human's lifespan could only be a heresy in human society.

(Eat various things, remember a lot of things all the time and tell it to people who were far away. That is my role.)

However, the length of their lifespan worked effectively in leaving knowledge for future generations.

At the convent, she was the only half-elf.

Anna recognized so and she was probably correct.

Therefore, when asked for their order, Anna ordered it.

[This... I want strawberry yogurt mousse please.]

It was a limited spring season otherworld dessert.

While waiting for their orders, she asked to talk with other customers that came from all over the world.

[Thank you for waiting! Here are your pound cake and black tea set, chocolate cake and black tea set, baked cheesecake and coffee set, and strawberry yogurt mousse and black tea set!]

Placed before them were their favourite cakes.

Celestine's usual beloved pound cake.





Julianne's was a cake made using chocolate that was only found in the otherworld.





A cake using cheese with the faint smell of otherworld alcohol named brandy.





And piled on top of the bowl was the strawberry yogurt mousse made by mixing red berry fruits with white milk.



It was an unknown confection to Anna.

(...Indeed, it looks like a pudding.)

Although it was decorated with soft cream and strawberries that were cut into four, it

did look like a pudding as described in the menu.

(...First, the berry.)

For the time being, she would postpone eating the mousse and ate the surrounding decorations.

Unlike Pudding a la mode that was eaten by the half-elf magician, the only fruit was bright red berries.

Anna speared the first berry with a fork and ate it.

(...Un. The otherworld berries are sweet after all.)

The red berry used for decoration tasted sweet and sour.

Its sweetness was strong, sweeter than any berry Anna knew.

Then, its sweet and sour taste mixed with the soft and sweet cream and spread in her mouth.

To be honest, when Anna first came to otherworld dining hall, her world of sweetness was still narrow. Hence, even berries and cream felt adequate for a delicious dessert.

(...Un. Next is this.)

After enjoying the sweet berries and cream, she finally proceeded to the mousse.

She scooped the soft mousse with a fork and brought it to her mouth.

(It's different from pudding but... it's delicious.)



The moment she brought it to her mouth, she knew.

It had a different flavor than the soft pudding she once ordered.

The mousse seemed to be moist and had many small holes.

The bubbles containing the juice were crushed by her tongue.

It flowed, the sweet and sour taste of strawberry fruit.

Although the taste was sweet enough, it was less sweet and had a stronger acidity compared to the fruit itself.

(...The sweetness is weaker than before, but this is okay.)

However, it tasted delicious.

To Anna, the mousse with reduced sweetness complimented the sweet berries and cream.

By not being too sweet, it was in complete harmony with its decorations.

And the sweetness and sourness could be adjusted by changing the rate she ate, so she did not get tired of it.

(...Again, I think the otherworld confectionaries are better than our world's.)

The various delicate ingenuity of this world's sweets.

That ingenuity was subjected to the desserts served in this restaurant and was helpful as reference.

(...I have to study more.)

While eating with such excuses in mind, she finished her mousse.

[Fuu...]

Finally, while drinking the sugared black tea, she exhaled.



Today's sweet was also delicious.

(When we return, I have to record this.)

While rolling the tea in her mouth, Anna thought to write today's story on a bunch of parchments in her room.

It may be only a confection, but it was a confection.

The research had just begun and may last longer than Anna's lifespan, which would last a few hundred years, but that was why Anna thought that she must go down this

path.

Anna's steady efforts would become a great guide and milestone to those who would advance the otherworld's backwards confectionaries, but that was a story of the next century.

CHAPTER 65

SAKE STEAMED CLAMS



He cooked “it” after thoroughly removing the sand and tasted one that was done.

[...Un, tasty.]

He nodded to the taste and fragrance spreading in his mouth and called Aletta.

[Deliver this one.]

He served it on a deep bowl, added butter to the baked bread and passed it to Aletta.

[Yes! I’m off.]

After receiving it, Aletta went to the mobile device named “elevator” (that she thought moved using magic).

That time was right before Saturday evening... a little while before the second floor

bar “Leonhart” opened.

The master of Leonhart would put in an order for dinner right around this time, as a living preparation before continuing his work from evening to late at night.

The things he asked were various based on his mood at that time, but every year when this season came, he always ordered this.

The main character of this dish was sake, and the master was naturally an alcohol drinker.

[...That's right. Today's long awaited side dish is this.]

The owner decided to cook this as that day's side dish for alcohol.

...He was aware of the customers who seemed to like this.

[For those small old men, this must be delightful.]

Every time they came, they would surely drink so much that he would make a huge deficit if he had an unlimited drink service, those small old men customers.

Although they had not shown up for the last few weeks, it seemed they would come today, that's what his intuition as the owner said.

Gard and Guilem, the dwarven craftsmen, climbed steadily up the spring mountain where some snow still remained.

[Seriously, it's so cold!]

[Look, just a little more! Keep it up!]

Although the season was finally spring, it was still located at the top of the mountain.

It was still cold though they wore coats that served as thick leather armors and armors made of bear fur.

[The weather is clear! If we miss it, we're going to regret it!]

[Nou! If it snows every Satur's day, I would wonder if the Goddess of Fire had changed her job to the Goddess of Sky!]

Guilem nodded to Gard's words.

It would be their first time in twenty days they could drink otherworld alcohol.

Even during winter, the two of them went through a lot of trouble just for "that".

Gard and Guilem were about the same as ordinary dwarves...

As alcoholics, they would brave snow and cold winds for delicious liquors.

However, the opponent was a winter mountain.

Whenever there was a snow storm at the mountain, it would be life-threatening for them no matter how sturdy a dwarf was.

As expected of a dwarf's life... if they went to the netherworld, they would never be able to drink alcohol ever again.

For the last two "Satur's Day", the mountain's weather was rough as there were snow storms, so they could not help but to give up while crying.

And today.

The weather was beautifully sunny.

The ideal weather for "Satur's Day".

That's why they gladly carried their axes and climbed the mountain while donning thick coats instead of their armors.

[Ou. I see it.]

[Ou. Let's go.]

They walked for a while and reached their destination.

A heavily constructed and sturdy mountain hut with snow piled on the roof.

Formerly, Gard and Guilem cooperated and rebuilt it quietly on a mountain road where people seldom passed through.

[Hey, hurry up!]

[I know!]

After they entered the cabin, they swallowed their spit while opening the sturdy steel door that was the entrance to the very small room at the back of the cabin.

The door was heavy enough that several people were needed to open it and the room was so small that even an ordinary human couldn't lie on the floor.

A mysterious door appeared in this room once in 7 days.

[Okay! Let's go!]

[Ou, I can't wait to drink the otherworld liquors!]

A black wooden door with a picture of a cat was hidden behind the steel door.

Gard turned the brass handle and they rushed into the restaurant with enough speed to drown the bell sound.

They sat on an empty table with enough momentum to rock their chairs and yelled.

[[Three mugs of beers for now! Immediately!!!]]



To drink cold beer in a warm room.

It was essential for wetting their thirsty throats after climbing that mountain.

After gulping down two mugs of beers each, they looked at the menu while sipping at their third mugs.

[For the liquor... after the cold morning, I want something hot.]

[Then it's atsukan. Though there's a problem of its small quantity.]

The first to be decided was the alcohol.

The warmed sake made of rice was precious for both of them who lived in the Eastern Continent.

Though they were thirsty, their bodies were cooled even further by the cold beer, so it would be a treat.

[Then the food...]

[Well... oi, waitress! What is today's side dish for liquor!?]

The sake they ordered did not fit deep fried seafood.

Whenever that happened, Gard would ask Aletta who naturally remembered this kind of thing.

That day's side dish for alcohol.

This was something the otherworld dining hall would prepare for their customers who ordered alcohol. The food served would change every day.

They had recently started to order this because they could enjoy dishes that were not in the menu.

[Yes. Today's dish is sake steamed clams. It's a dish in which shellfishes are simmered in sake.]

Aletta told them that day's recommended dish.

[Hoo! To think there's such a thing!]

[Then we'll order it! Two servings per person for now!]

Shellfish boiled in liquor.

When they heard that, the dwarves couldn't afford not to order it.

With their mouths aligned, Gard and Guilem ordered that.

[I understand. Please wait a moment.]

Aletta should have known.

She replied pleasantly and went back to the kitchen for a while.

[Thank you for waiting! Here are your atsukan and sake steamed clams. Etto, I was told that it tastes better with shoyu.

Well then, please enjoy.]

Placed before them was food heaped on a large dish, warm sake inside a small pottery and two small cups made of pottery.

[Ou! Then, let's eat!]

[I'll certainly order this again after it's finished!]

While Aletta turned to attend other customers, Gard and Guilem looked at the food.

[Hoo! This is really boiled with sake!]

[It certainly smells of sake! The scent of alcohol!]

They gazed at the unknown dish that looked delicious.





Small shellfishes, smaller than oysters, were piled in the bowl with their shells open. Chopped green herbs were then placed above the pile.

The scent wafting from it was a mixture of melting butter and sake made from Western Continent's rice.

But, it wasn't cooked for a long time judging from the distinctive scent of sake.

[Let's eat!]

[Ou!]

Their mouth watered after smelling the drifting scent of delicious liquor, so they started to eat.

They grasped the full bottle of warm sake with their left hands, though it's nothing to their thick dwarven palm, and picked up the clams with their right hands.

While dwarven teeth were sturdy, it was not tasty to eat shellfish with its shell, so they only ate the body.

[[Umu! Delicioius!]]

They nodded to that taste.

A thick, fresh clam wrapped in the flavor of butter and aroma of sake.

The seasonings were only salt and spices, but it made the taste of clams to be fully

enjoyed.

And more than anything...

[It absolutely fits with atsukan!]

[Ou!]

With confidence in its taste, they fully enjoyed it with sake this time.

They discarded the shells, picked up the next clams, ate it, and drank the atsukan while the taste of clams still lingered in their mouth.

[This is effective!]

[Drinking hot sake while eating food made with sake! Oh yeah!]

They were convinced with the compatibility.

The atsukan had sweet scent similar to a fruit. Went the hot sake warmed their throats, that scent mingled with the taste of herbs and clams remaining in their mouths and enhanced the umami of the sake.

The way they learned from the samurai hailing from the Western Continent greatly satisfied them.

After they ate all the clams, they drank the soup remaining in the bowl and emptied their sake bottles.

[Ou! Another serving!]

[Two servings per person! Another atsukan too!]

[Ye-s! I'll be right there!]

They ordered again and noisily waited for their food.

[Next, let's eat it the way the girl suggested!]

[Shoyu! Here!]



As they were accustomed to it, they sprinkled the shoyu to the dish and ate it again.

[Hoo... it certainly makes a difference with shoyu!]

[Certainly, the taste is clear! After all, with the exception of deep-fried, it should be shoyu!]

The taste changed drastically when shoyu was added to the sake steamed clams compared to earlier.

Instead of thinning the taste of shellfish, shoyu's refreshing saltiness was added.

The clean saltiness of shoyu stood out exceptionally for seafood.

It's no exception for the sake steamed clams.

[I can't stop! Let's eat more!]

[The problem is the amount is too small! ...Oi, waitress, keep bringing more!]

Delicious sake and otherworld dining hall's cooking for the first time in 20 days.

To this combination, the dwarves' drinking bout showed great excitement.

...As a result, they continued to eat and drink until late night as usual.

CHAPTER 66

TONJIRU ONCE AGAIN



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After he finished eating to the limit for the first time in two days, Tida was deeply satisfied and breathed out gently.

[Fuu...]

Tida found this place while he was soaked by the rain, blown by the wind and desperately searching for food.

The door stuck to the ground even though it was blown by the wind and rain during the Eastern Continent's storm.

The door led to the otherworld dining hall.

—O, customer. You're soaking wet... typhoon, huh. What a disaster.

Fortunately this is a restaurant. You can pay me later, you should eat for now.

Otherworld dining hall... the old owner was a kind man.

He listened to Tida's circumstances of why he came in through the door while being soaked to the bone and gave him a meal for free.

What he gave him was omelet stuffed with minced meat and Oranie along with white rice, which was only obtainable by the nobles of the Sea Country.



Pickled vegetables preserved with salt to prevent rot and... tonjiru.



Tonjiru. It seemed to be a celebratory dish as it was only served during “meat day”.

It was a gorgeous soup filled with meat and vegetables and seasoned with salted elf beans.

Tida repeatedly asked for refills and filled his belly.

(I feel somewhat bad... I just want to eat delicious food.)

He felt guilty of his great satisfaction.

Right now, everyone in the ship, along with the captain, was as hungry as he was just now.

Therefore, his feeling of satisfaction changed to guilt.

(I know it's impudent... but I wonder if I can bring back just a little bit of food.)

It was such a time he thought such thing.

[Hoi, here's your souvenir.]

A beautiful large purple cloth bag inside a transparent bag that he had never seen before was placed before him.

[A, ano, this is...]

[It's fine. You are one of the sailors that were caught up by the typhoon right?]

The owner said so while laughing at Tida's strange expression.

[I know you have companions. I usually refuse takeaway request for tonjiru, but this time is special.]

[...Are, are you sure?]

Tida asked the owner's unexpected kindness.

When he came in, Tida did not have any money.

That's why he couldn't pay for this “souvenir”.

[I can't ask for money when people's life is on danger.]

There's no need to pay. It's heavy, so be careful.]

[Is, is that so...]

Hearing the owner's words, Tida grabbed the bag.

A massive, warm feeling came back.

Drifting from the bag was the scent of the gem from a while ago.

Despite having a full belly, his mouth watered.

[I'm truly thankful to you. Well, please excuse me.]

[Okay. I'll wait for your next visit.]

The owner bowed to Tida who lowered his head, and Tida jumped out again to the storm while bringing the warm package.

Three days had passed since they were caught up by the storm and anchored to this island without anything.

(...This is bad.)

Fen, the captain of Sea Country's trade ship, felt that the decision was imminent.

After the evil war had ended and the demon's power became reduced, the world became peaceful and trade between continents started to flourish.

Especially between the Kingdom which was the most developed country in the Eastern Continent and the Sea Country where shipping became popular since a long time ago due to their countless small island territories, ships frequently travelled as their trade became booming.

A trade ship of Sea Country captained by Fen was one of them.

(Geez, and here I thought that annoying lord of the ocean had ceased to exist.)

When he thought of it, he might have been careless.

The "lord of the sea" had sunk many ships so far.

A few years ago, the lord of the sea drifted to the harbor of the Sea Country as a carcass that stunk of decay.

It seemed to be damaged by magic, a myriad of arrows and harpoons.

According to the rumors, when it tried to sink several military ships of the Principality

heading to the Sea Country, it was killed by a general famous for suppressing demons.

Also, now that the Kraken was gone, not only the troublesome lord of the sea was gone, monsters of the sea that used to be its food could now grow into adults.

The sea route that was considered dangerous before was now unexpectedly safe.

...That was one of the reasons why Fen decided to leave the town five days ago to deliver cargoes though there's a slight premonition of storm.

[I'm hungry...]

[That Tida fellow went out to search for something.]

[I say it's pointless. This island has been deserted for many years.]

[Fortunately, water is raining outside, but there's no food... we can't hunt for bird or fish.]

[Aa, damn! Is there no way out!? Even though the nearest town is only half a day away!?!]

[It's impossible. If the ship tries to sail in this storm, it'll sink. We have no choice but to wait.]

Mixing with the sound of the storm outside, the voice of his underlings could be heard.

Their voices were uniformly anxious and impatient.

Right now, the ship was anchored to one of the islands of the Sea Country... an island where creatures couldn't live due to its lack of vegetation.

Fortunately, water could be obtained from the sky, but that was not the case for food.

The storage in the ship was almost empty as of yesterday night and there's no food item left.

They couldn't catch any bird or fish in this storm.

Apparently Tida, one of the apprentices that just joined, left to search for food, but it's visible that it would be futile.

...In other words, they had to wait until this storm stopped with empty stomach or sail the ship at the risk of sinking.

(I give up...)

He was forced to make a decision when it's time.

[A, captain! It's serious! Please come quickly!]

One of the veteran sailors that's his confidant rushed in.

[What? What happened?]

[I, it's...]

After regaining his breath, he gave Fen a smile.

Though he was suffering from empty stomach until earlier, he had a delighted expression.

[That Tida fellow came back with food! It's superb stuff!]

Good news for them.

[Delicious!]

[This thing's delicious!]

[This is the God's guidance!]

[Well done, Tida!]

[...I have lived for a long time, but this is the first time I ate something this delicious.]

The men ate with momentous speed.

A young apprentice sailor brought back otherworld food.

It's massive for one person, but for the men here, it's a little bit insufficient.

It should be quite expensive, a potful of soup full of meat and vegetables along with some excellent rice.

The men brought out the bowls and devoured the food.

(This thing... it's delicious even if we're not starving.)

Fen who got slightly more soup because he's the captain thought so.

The food that apprentice Tida found was very delicious.

Slightly still hot white rice was brought with freshly made soup contained in a superb pot.

It was appreciable enough just to say it's a decent food, but when Fen ate it, he sensed that it tasted better than what he usually ate.

(The rice is delicious... but the question is the soup.)

Fen sipped the soup that was poured into a silver bowl.

The brown soup that he had never seen before was salty with slight taste of elf beans.



(The seasoning is superb and the ingredients are delicious too.)

The soup had pork meat and various vegetables as its ingredients.

The pork meat that was the main ingredient was sliced thinly with a little bit of its fat remaining.

While tasting the meat itself, the taste of its fat had melted into the soup and softened the soup's strong saltiness.

In addition, the other ingredients were also tasty.

The braised thinly-sliced Oranie was sweet; every time he chewed, plenty of the soup it absorbed burst in his mouth.

Also, the piping hot pale yellow vegetable, something that was cut into squares to make it easier to eat, collapsed and left gentle warmth in his mouth.

He sipped the soup and ate a mouthful of rice.

A combination of the strong salty soup and the sweet rice that had cooled down a bit.

It was deeply satisfying and he couldn't stop his hands.

Of course, being hungry was a big reason, but that was not all.

It was really delicious. Even if he was somewhat full, he could still eat it deliciously.

(After this, I'll listen to Tida's story in detail.)

Usually, it's impossible to obtain such excellent food in an island without anything.

Fen wanted to listen to his story in detail.

...Tentatively, it's the first time he taste such fine food.

Next day, the storm had ended and the boat sailed under clear blue sky.

[Yo~shi! Just a bit more and the island will be visible!]

[At last! I can finally drink alcohol!]

[Ou, me too! The food yesterday was delicious, but it's disappointing that there's no alcohol.]

[Yareyare. It's said that the more delicious food we eat, the longer we live.]

They spent the whole day eating the fine meal that Tida brought back.

The sailors were uniformly hungry, but their faces were bright.

They would arrive at the populated town in a while.

Once they landed, they would enjoy drinking and women. Later, they would sail to a huge town and sell their goods.

Their travel was filled with hope.

(After we sell of the cargo, we'll buy pepper and coral, and...)

As the ship sailed, Fen was planning for their next journey.

He considered which city to sell their goods, what goods to buy and which route they should take.

(...Once in 7 days, huh? Well, if the time comes, I guess.)

Looking at one point on the sea route map, Fen pondered.

There was a small unhabituated island that did not have any meaning until yesterday.

Nekoya island.

Along with a new name that he just gave yesterday.

CHAPTER 67

SCONE



The manager of the “Flying Puppy” upstairs visited at a certain Saturday evening after the otherworld dining hall had finished its work hours safely.

[Yo. Sorry to visit you so late at night... yoshi, even Aletta-chan is here.]

After finishing the cleanup and their late dinner, it was time for Aletta to return.

He held it firmly at the moment.

[Ou, how unusual. You never came this late before.]

The owner asked his childhood friend curiously.

Flying Puppy closed at 7 p.m.

Even though he too had to cleanup and prepare for the next day, it was unusual for him to remain until the owner finished his own cleanup.

[Aa, the thing is, there's a plan that I'm planning to do since spring break. After closing

the store, I was doing various things.]

The manager showed what he had in his left hand to the owner.

A basket covered with beautiful cloth.

He thrust his hand inside and took something out...

[Waa, pretty...]

Aletta saw it and said unintentionally.

A transparent, well-formed glass bottle with metallic lid.

It contained dark red transparent thing.

[Hoo. Is that strawberry jam?]



As soon as he saw it, the owner noticed its identity and asked the manager.

[Ou. Spring strawberry fair for a limited time. It's possible to exchange this for 20 stamps instead of one cake.

It used to be bad, but I guarantee its taste. So you know...]

The manager nodded to the owner's question and handed the bottle to Aletta.

[E? E?]

Though she received the slippery glass bottle, Aletta was confused.

While laughing at Aletta's puzzled face, the manager said.

[It's a present for Aletta-chan. For the time being, it could keep for a long time due to its sugar, but after opening it once, store it in a cool place and finish it as soon as possible.]

[...E!? Is this fine!?]

At last Aletta comprehended the situation and asked in surprise.

The manager was a confectionary craftsman of a different world who could make fascinating sweets that fascinated aristocrats, princesses and high priestesses.

Jam made by the craftsman... it's fruit boiled in sugar.

She did not think that it's more expensive than the cookies, but it should be quite expensive nonetheless.

[Of course. Aletta-chan is my regular customer you know? You always buy the biggest cookie can every week.]



The manager nodded to Aletta's surprise.

It was for someone who bought cookie cans as a gift once every 7 days and as a discount price for an employee at the same time.

In such circumstances, the manager decided to treat Aletta as a “frequent customer”.

[First, we have to taste test this... I've been making these things.]

As he said so, the manager lifted the cloth from the basket. Inside was a few bottles of red jam smaller than the one he gave to Aletta and some wheat-coloured breads the size of a fist.

[Oh, scones? That's unusual.]



The owner asked the manager.

[Aa, in order to taste test the jam, such a simple thing is the best, so I tried baking it.

It's good with black tea. Well, it's a midnight snack. Let's eat together.]

[Ou. Then let's make black tea. Aletta, please help me.]

[Yes. Thank you for the food.]

The owner and Aletta took their invitation and quickly prepared the tea before seating at the same table.

[Then, don't hesitate to eat. It's my treat.]

A late night snack began with the manager's words.

First, Aletta ate the scone without adding anything.

(Eh? It's not... sweet?)

As it's not long since it's baked, it's still slightly warm and taste faintly of butter... but it's not sweet.

[Un. The taste of wheat is solid and it's good.]

[Right? Well, it doesn't hold a candle to the breads that Kimura-san makes.]

The owner and the manager also ate it without adding anything.

[Yoshi, let's try it with the jam next. It's why I brought it.]

He opened one of the smaller bottles and scooped the jam with a spoon before handing it to Aletta.

[The bread is solid so you can just smear it on top.]

[Ye, yes. Then...]

Prompted by the manager, Aletta scooped the jam and smeared it on top of the scone.



A jam with the small strawberries inside.

She was fascinated with the clear red colour that became transparent due to the overhead light; it was as beautiful as a jewel to her.

(It might be a bit of a waste to eat this.)

While thinking such thing, she started to eat.

Spreading in her mouth was the sweet and sour flavor of strawberry.

The faint acidity of strawberry complimented the sweetness of the sugar added to make jam.

While she chewed with the jam flavor spreading in her mouth, the berries that's still somewhat intact collapsed and the fruit juice leaked out.

(I see. So that's the reason the bread is not sweet!)

And the bread was called scone earlier.

It alone was not sweet, but with the sweet jam added, the overall sweetness became balanced.

The scone became a fine sweet when jam was eaten with it.

[Un. It's good. Certainly this is something that can be sold at the store.]

[Right? I think it's particularly good this year.]

The owner and the manager also agreed with the taste.

This was saleable.

[Still, this... yoshi, wait a moment.]

The owner noticed something about the taste and went to the kitchen to retrieve a plate with something on it.

[That is?]

[It's cream cheese. It should go well with this jam.]

He said so and placed the plate on the table with a spoon.

[Oo! How nice! Certainly jam and cream cheese fit each other.]



The manager said happily to the cream cheese brought by the owner. He then garnished the scones with jam and cream cheese before taking a bite.

[Un. They really do get along with each other. It permeates in the empty stomach.]

He ate the food deliciously and drank the tea before divulged the words with a sigh.

[You'll get fat if you eat too much.]

The owner was also eating the scone with jam and cream cheese when he smiled wryly to his close friend.

(It's true! Jam and cream cheese really fit each other!)

Following those two, Aletta also convinced to that taste.

The slightly sour taste of the cream cheese and faint acidity of strawberries used for jam.

The two mixed with each other's taste on the strong wheat base, making a difference.

(Now that I remember, jam was added to the cheesecake served to Hilda-san.)

In retrospect, the berry sauce was also used for the demon mercenary regular's favourite.

At that time, Aletta understood the reason why deeply.

[Fuu...]

[I ate a lot somehow.]

[Ou. Did you eat too much?]

Finally drinking the black tea, the three people exhaled a satisfied breath.



[So, how was the jam?]

After a breath, the manager asked Aletta.

[It was truly delicious.]

Aletta answered with a smile.

Aletta thought from the bottom of her heart that all otherworld foods were delicious.

[I see. Then take it. Since I have two... sorry, but you have to deliver it.]

In that case, the manager passed her the basket containing two bottles of jam. One that was just opened and one still not opened.

[Thank you very much. I'll cherish... eat it.]

(The other one... I'll give the unopened one to Shia-sama.)

This jam was given as a thank you for purchasing the cookies all the time.

As such, she should hand the better one to her employer's sister that gave the money.

While thinking such, Aletta received the basket.

(But the one that's opened... should be eaten right away, right?)

Meanwhile thoughtfully thinking such.

At a later date, Aletta's honest evaluation digressed a bit after she saw her employer and her sister lightly fought over the "sugar boiled fruit".

CHAPTER 68

SPANISH OMELET



Walking on foot, it took him 3 days to reach that place at the depth of the abundant mountain.

Being careful not to jostle the contents of the big bag, Carlos, who was a wolf therianthrope that's one head taller than the rest of his family, passed through the door of the cabin where his elder sister was residing.

[You came, Carlos. I've been waiting for you.]

She seemed to be waiting for Carlos, the woman who spoke at the same time he passed through... though they were family, she seemed like a child when she and Carlos stood side by side.

Her ears were erect while her tail shook like a child's when she welcomed Carlos who was an excellent warrior even in their family.

[Aa, it's been a long time, Adelia-ane.]

Carlos smiled involuntarily seeing the sociable smile on his sister's face that he had not seen in 3 months.

It's a waste. If Adelia-ane was not a priestess, she could be married immediately after reaching adulthood.

Carlos felt a slight loneliness in feeling that she was tougher than him, and considered to hug his "loveable" sister.

Yes, his sister was pretty and adorable, but she was also strong.

She was an excellent bow user that was better than him that was trained as a warrior.

In order to be a priestess, one must discover their talent from young age and learn at the capital.

The priests and priestesses who could borrow and exercise the power of the six pillars were always praised as trump cards that protected the people.

The scales of dragons that manifested due to their prayers could not be grazed by swords and arrows of mighty warriors, and even if the scales were torn, the dragon's fangs and claws could tear through steel.

Their breath could defeat a group of warriors in one swoop, their wings flew faster than a bird's, and the blood of a dragon could heal their injuries in a blink of eye.

And the high priests and priestesses who had full access to the power could fully turn into a dragon, making those with wisdom shook in fear.

The great high priest called when fruitful land was fought over brought down an army of hundreds of men and stopped armies of thousands.

And without another high priest that served another god stopping that person, they could settle the battlefield.

Such a sight was a spectacle that was often seen in the battlefields.

And Adelia was the one who continued to practice in order to become a high priestess while Carlos helped to train their family.

[Sorry. I asked for a lot of things.]

[What, don't mind it. Adelia-ane should focus in becoming stronger.]

To his sister that apologized, Carlos replied as a matter of course.

His older sister had not acquired enough skill to become a high priestess yet.

However, she possessed enough talent to be told by other high priests serving the same god that she could become a high priestess in 20 years if she continued to train.

Among the six pillars, therianthropes like Carlos worshiped the Green Goddess who controlled the earth.

The families who had high priests as a relative had a tendency to be respected by the therianthrope society that valued strength.

[Strong, huh... un. You're right.]

But to Carlos' words, Adelia answered a little bit crisply.

To be honest, Adelia did not like to fight.

A priestess should have talent in fighting, and when it came down to it, they could kill each other by all means and shouldn't be confused about it.

[I brought many souvenirs. There are a large pot of salt and food preserved in spices. There are also dried apples that Adelia-ane likes.]

[Yay~! Thanks!]

However, such complicated inner thoughts were blown away by her brother's words.

And with her younger brother's words, she saw the things that was arranged on a flat stone that served as a substitute for a dining table.

For Adelia who continued her training, the valuable items sometimes brought by her brother that was only available in the city made her happy.

Especially in the last month or so, she had ran out of "that".

[Then, there are five pieces of substitute underwear that kaa-san sewed, the meat and fur of a boar that I killed. Two flame stones. Three fish hooks...]

Carlos smiled at his innocent sister and took out the item he brought... she innocently raised her eyebrows seeing the last item.

He thought that there was something wrong, but it was definitely something she asked for.

It was the one she asked for when she returned home three months ago, and he knew that she purposely went there when returning to training.

So Carlos felt a little lost, took it out and put it on the table.

[...And there're 50 silver coins. Is this okay?]

[...Waa, thank you. You brought it properly.]

A leather bag was placed on the table.

The contents were shining silver coins.

Looking at it made Adelia delighted.

[What do you use it for in the mountain, Adelia-ane?]

Carlos who was confused by the situation questioned Adelia.

Fifty silver coins. Although it was not a small amount, it was something that did not have any purpose in such a mountain.

Of course, there's plenty of uses if she went down the mountain, but it would take three days from here to the city, and in the first place, there's Carlos in the city.

He didn't know what she used it for.

[Aa, un. I used it to eat fried eggs at the otherworld dining hall.]



TN: The raw said Tamagoyaki.

However, Adelia answered Carlos without elaborating further.

[Fried eggs? ...And what is otherworld dining hall?]

Carlos couldn't understand well.

[E? ...Aa!? So you don't know about it?]

Adelia noticed that she never told Carlos about it.

[Then it's fine. Today is "Satur's day" after all... would Carlos like to join?]

And it was this place of pleasure that was her recent financial reason.

It was a place that Adelia usually used as a training ground, so to speak.

There were scattered rocks marred with scars caused by Adelia.

[Adelia-ane, what is this?]

What Carlos was seeing was the door.

A black door settled on the largest rock of the rocky area.

[That's the entrance to otherworld dining hall.]

She glanced sideways at her bewildered brother and opened the door quickly.

‘Chirinchirin’, the door opened with a bell sound.

[Hey, faster. The door will disappear once it’s closed. So go ahead.]

Adelia said while remembering the regretful feeling that one time she noticed she had forgotten her wallet at the time she opened it and gradually lowered her tail.

[A, aa.]

After his sister’s encouragement and seeing Carlos going through the door, Adelia also jumped into otherworld dining hall.

[...It’s quite bright.]

Carlos murmured while watching something he thought as magic shining in white on the ceiling.

It was a place far from common sense.

[Maa, maa. Try the dish here for the time being. All the food here is delicious.]

She pulled Carlos’ hand and sat on an appropriate seat.

[O-i, Aletta-chan! Give me that spa-something fried egg! In party size!]

As soon as she sat, Adelia loudly said her order to Aletta who was carrying food for other customers.

[Oka-y! Spanish omelet! Please wait a moment!]

As she was accustomed to Adelia’s behavior, Aletta also clearly replied and went to the kitchen.

[...Adelia-ane? Isn’t she a wicked pagan? Is that okay?]

Carlos who was watching their exchange asked Adelia in surprise.

She was a race that served the Evil God though unlike those that had the head and lower body of a goat, she was the same as a human being with the exception of her goat horns.

As far as Carlos knew, she was a “wicked pagan”.

The monster that made the great six pillars to gather all their powers to destroy from this world, the Chaos of Million Colours.

The existences which were “beings of primeval chaos” were different from other beings that worshipped and served the six pillars and were called wicked pagans.

Those wicked pagans were enemies of six pillars’ worshippers with the aim of recalling Chaos of Million Colours and to surpass the high priests that could even change into dragons.

He wondered what happened to them in the past decades as they hid themselves from the world stage, but as a priestess, she shouldn’t overlook them even in such conspicuous place.

[Ahaha. It’s fine, it’s fine. Aletta-chan is not a bad girl.]

Adelia laughed off Carlos’ concern.

Of course, she was at first surprised that the owner hired a wicked pagan after she had visited the restaurant a few times.

However, as far as she could see, Aletta was serious about her work and was not doing anything wrong.

So she would not do anything. Besides, it’s more troubling to make a fuss and became a “banned person”.

Apparently, other priests and priestesses that visited the restaurant also agreed with that and never saw Aletta as a wicked pagan.

[Is that so... maa, if Adelia-ane said so.]

To Adelia’s answer, Carlos was relieved.

There’s something a little missing, but Adelia wouldn’t misread a person’s true nature.

Carlos thought that there’s no mistake.

[Thank you for waiting. Here’s your Spanish omelet!]

Then Aletta brought their food.

There were two small plates, one knife, three forks and a red tube.

It was packed on a ceramic plate that was carried with both hands.

[Bread? ...No, don't tell me it's fried eggs!?]



Big pale yellow omelet.

Carlos stared at the luxurious item of extraordinary size that was usually served during a feast.

[That's right. Isn't it amazing? And it just costs 1 silver coin.]

Adelia puffed up her thin chest while waving her tail to the fragrance drifting from the food.

Even when it looked like this, the omelet that used about five to six eggs cost only 1 silver coin.

Normally, one egg cost several bronze coins and 1 silver coin had the same value as 10 bronze coins.

[That's amazing...]

Carlos' mouth watered after smelling the sweet fragrance of the omelet.

[Well, let's eat.]

Smiling to her brother, Adelia started the business by picking up a fork.

She cut a part of the big omelet and served it on an empty plate.

And she gave it to Carlos with a fork.

[Eat now.]

Perhaps Carlos wasn't able to wait for it.

When he received the omelet, he took a big bite.

[...! Delicious!]

Carlos was surprised by its taste.

Various ingredients were contained in the fried eggs.

The eggs themselves were skillfully fried with butter, there's a bit of saltiness and sharp flavor of pepper along with slight taste of cheese. But the ingredients were good too.

The piping hot potatoes that easily crumbled in his mouth.

Grains of corn that were much sweeter than the usual corns he ate.

The finely sliced green onion was crisp, the thinly sliced smoked meat was wrapped by the soft taste of eggs and gave the eggs the umami of meat.

The part of omelet given to Carlos was finished in a blink of eye.

(No good! There's not enough!)

While licking the lingering taste of eggs in his mouth, Carlos reached for more eggs.

If he looked at it, the omelet served on a large platter was steadily decreasing... Adelia was also eating steadily.

He confirmed it and noticed it when he saw Adelia.

[Adelia-ane, that is?]

Adelia had a red tube in her hand pointing at her eggs.

The tube made of unknown material easily deformed when his sister squeezed it and squirted something red from the sharp tip.

Apparently Adelia ate her eggs after smearing it with the red sauce.



[N? This is a seasoning called ketchup. It's made of stewed Marmette and tastes sour like vinegar.]

Adelia said such before eating the omelet with ketchup.

The sour taste of ketchup was added to the omelet made of eggs, meat and vegetables.

The overall taste tightened and became even more delicious.

The egg with meat and vegetables were already deliciously seasoned with salt and pepper, but it was even more delicious with ketchup.

[Oh! Certainly it's more delicious with ketchup!]

Carlos imitated Adelia and laughed after he tasted it.

As his older sister said, ketchup made a huge difference to the omelet.

He thought that the fried eggs were delicious as it was, but after eating it with ketchup, he felt that there's something lacking.

The taste also helped Carlos in greedily eating the food.

[Right? It roughly fits the egg dishes of this restaurant.]

Adelia was also pleased seeing her brother's childlike appearance.

In this restaurant, there were various dishes using egg and they were quite cheap.

After finding the door at the training ground, she tried many dishes, but egg dishes were generally compatible with ketchup.

[How is it? Do you want another serving?]

[Un!]

The omelet served on the big platter was about to be finished.

To Adelia's question, Carlos nodded without thinking it twice.

[I see. Then, I'll order alcohol as well. O~i, Aletta-cha~n!]

They reunited after a long time while eating delicious food.

And plenty of silver coins in the pocket.

Being carried away, Adelia decided to be more luxurious today.

CHAPTER 69

NAPOLITAN



'Chirinchirin' while Jonathan was passing through the door, his eyes caught it.

[Then, botchan. Afterwards...]

[Aa. I entrust this to you.]

He was quick to get permission from his tentative boss Sirius and went to the back table without being guided by Aletta.

[A, welcome. I'll bring your water immediately.]

[Aa. Also, I would like to order immediately... I want pizza with mixed seafood.]



As soon as he sat down, the waitress immediately came. He then smiled wryly as he stared at the back area.

(Well, well. He's as enthusiastic as ever.)

Jonathan said that that table was "a special seat for chefs".

From that table's position, he could glimpse a little bit of the kitchen and ask about the preparation of otherworld food.

Jonathan, as Sirius' servant, noticed it after he went to the restaurant several times, so he always sat on that special seat even if he was with Sirius.

...When there's a daughter of a merchant bringing a swordsman acquaintance or elves that occasionally visit otherworld dining hall, that table was usually occupied, so it was not only Jonathan that noticed that fact.

[Well...]

He stared at Jonathan's enthusiasm for his work and sat down on an empty seat.

[Aa. Excuse me, I would like to order.]

After taking Jonathan's order, the waitress came to take his.

[Yes, what would you like to order?] [

[Aa, I would like Napolitan with sausage. I would also like café au lait after the meal.]

For the time being, he would leave Jonathan to his “study” and ordered Napolitan.

In the otherworld, smoked meat was called bacon and meat stuffed intestine was called sausage.

After eating various dishes in this restaurant, this was Sirius’ favourite food.

[Yes. Please wait a moment.]

He silently nodded to the demon waitress who had unusual neat appearance and glanced around.

(...When I look closely, there are customers that came from unknown places.)

Sirius was born at the capital city of the most prosperous country in the Eastern Continent.

Also, he was born in a household of merchants that dealt even with the royal family, so he was accustomed to seeing people of different origins.

That’s why he felt that there’s some credibility to the recent rumour that was spreading in the capital.

South of the continents where humans lived... there’s an unknown continent beyond Dragon God Ocean, where there’s a different culture of people, even non-human races, worshiping the six pillars as their goddesses.

An adventurer “discovered” its existence and entrusted another adventurer with his notebook that summarized its views.

It was one of the dubious rumours that Sirius heard.

Originally, it was a kind of a joke as there’s no credibility.

Since the first time human beings built civilization, no one knew what’s “beyond Dragon God Ocean” where dangerous sea monsters lived.

Until a while ago, Sirius did not believe it.

Yes, until he came to this restaurant.

This was the otherworld dining hall... a place where customers came from all corners

of Sirius' world.

If he looked at the customers, he could see it.

Sirius was familiar with various people dressed up in Eastern Continent clothes, but there were people that were dressed in less familiar clothes of Western Continent.

Although there's no detail in the first place about it, he knew about different races like lizardmen, ogres and fairies.

Though there was a human or a dwarf mixed with them, some customers wore clothes that Sirius had never seen before.

Those people had brown skin like people of the Sand Country, but they wore boldly dressed and had no sands clinging to their hands and feet.

In addition, there were customers like lamias and beastmen who were usually feared as human attacking monsters wearing well-maintained, good quality clothes.

The fact made Sirius think that there's credibility to the rumour.

(When I think about it, the question is whether the adventurers in question are customers of this restaurant...)

And thinking so, it explained why the adventurers who had accomplished such a huge discovery in history gave explanations that fit a dubious rumour.

Sirius did not know all the customers that visited this restaurant.

If the "adventurer that went beyond Dragon God Ocean" was a "customer" of this restaurant...

[Thank you for waiting. Here's your Napolitan.]

While thinking such thing, his food came.

[Aa, thanks.]

As his order arrived, Sirius switched his feelings.

The Alphade trading company was a company that dealt with food.

Therefore, he must seriously face his food.

It was the teaching of his grandfather Thomas that founded the company.

That's why Sirius eyed the superfluous things of the Napolitan.



It was served on a brilliant white plate.

Bright green vegetables were mixed with the pasta that was dyed reddish orange by the Marmette sauce.

Thinly cut Oranie gave a hint of crispiness along with otherworld mushroom.

Sirius thought that Napolitan with its vivid colours was one of the most spectacular dishes of the otherworld dining hall with the exception of its confectionaries.

(Well, let's eat.)

The smell of butter and ketchup hit his stomach making it growl and Sirius picked up a fork.

The first bite.

While thinking so, he brought the pasta to his mouth.

(...Un. The taste changes if it's "sautéed".)

The aroma spreading in his mouth was not just boiled pasta.

The soft acidity of the ketchup absorbed by the integrated pasta and the taste of butter evenly accompanying it, it was a feast.

The secret flavor that was not found in the pasta dish that he usually ate was due to the cooking method.

According to Jonathan who observed the owner, he put butter on a shallow pan and sautéed the boiled pasta and its ingredients using said pan.

It was different from the common way of boiling and grilling. This way of sautéing was more common at the Ocean Country of the Western Continent.

As a result, Napolitan's fragrance was not found in boiled pasta poured with sauce.

(Un. The ingredients are delicious, but they don't break the balance.)

Sirius was convinced while eating the ingredients mixed in the pasta.

Like the pasta, the ingredients fried in butter and seasoned with ketchup were delicious.

The sliced green vegetable was crunchy and faintly bitter, the Oranie was sweet and the mushroom provided its own umami to the sauce.

Compared with bacon that was fatty and packed with flavor, sausage contained a lot of meat juice.

They were definitely delicious, but the amount was small.

It was a balance of ingredients to accompany the plenty pasta.

But that was the correct answer.

Sirius thought that Napolitan was a dish to enjoy the flavor of pasta.

It would be inappropriate if there were too many toppings.

(After all, they are there to compliment the pasta.)

If he discerned it better, there's another role for the toppings.

The ingredients gave its own flavor to the dish when eaten with the pasta.

There's a difference in taste, showing another facet of the pasta.

The pasta and the toppings were cooked together.

That was Sirius' evaluation of Napolitan.

(Well, let's change the flavor now...)

After eating half of the pasta, he reached for the things brought by the waitress along with his order.

The waitress brought a small tube.

He opened the lid and flipped it upside down. Yellowish white powder fell on top of his pasta.

If there's too much, the harmony would be broken, so he was careful.

After the pale yellow snow covered the top of his reddish orange pasta, he closed the lid and picked up his fork again.

He scooped the portion with cheese and ate it.

The finely ground cheese changed the flavor of Napolitan.

The cheese flavor softened the acidity of the sauce and at the same time contributed its unique flavor.

(Ok, this is the last.)

He reached for the small bottle containing red sauce on the table.

He deliberately poured the red sauce... Tabasco to Napolitan and took another bite.

The flavor attacking Sirius was an intense spicy flavour.

Although the taste was not in the Napolitan earlier, it stimulated his stomach and he continued to eat.

The Tabasco sauce, Jonathan said that it's apparently made from Togaran, was delicious.

It had a tremendous spicy flavor. If it's just a small amount, it gave food a wonderful accent. But too much would make it too spicy.

(Alright, the seasoning is perfect!)

However, it's delicious this time.

Sirius was very satisfied with the spiciness that fit his preference.

He was the son of the chief of Alpahde trading company which was one of the biggest businesses in the Kingdom and had a relation with the aristocrats.

Eventually, he would inherit the business. That's why he's amassing information to further expand the company.

However, only at this time, he was just a young man enjoying his Napolitan.

When he noticed it, there was only red residue on the plate.

[Fuu...]

Sirius rubbed his swollen belly, poured sugar into his café au lait and took a sip.

The sweetness of milk and sugar along with the bitter taste of slightly sour coffee combined to wash away the taste of Napolitan.



[...Ok.]

After eating one serving of Napolitan, Sirius regained his usual ambitious face again.

This time of relaxation only occurred once in 7 days.

After paying for his food, Sirius went back to the Kingdom with sure steps.

CHAPTER 70P

OTATO CHIPS



One of the regulars of otherworld dining hall, "Croquette", met that boy when the owner was away to finish a minor business.

[Umu. Today is this.]

To finish his meal, he wiped the remaining sauce with white bread and ate it.

Croquette had a very healthy appetite ever since he was young, and today he ate three servings of food.

His belly was full of comfortable heat and satisfaction after a delicious meal.

[Well, now that I'm alone... maa, I'll return after I rest for a bit.]

The restaurant was empty.

Originally, this restaurant was not very popular.

Still, when Croquette just came, there was Roast Cutlet and an old adventurer called Minced Cutlet, but they went home as soon as they finished their business here.

Also, the owner went out saying that he would go shopping for a bit because he was out of ingredients.

Since he had paid for his food earlier, he could just leave, but whatever, returning from this restaurant would be a bit of a hassle.

He only found out this place since he had a hobby of going out to faraway places since he was young, even from the nearest private residence, a horse was needed to reach the entrance.

[If I abdicate, I could build a place of residence here.]

It was when he was relaxing while he was thinking such things.

[O-i, grandpa, are you here?]

One boy came out of the kitchen.

[That's weird. Grandma said grandpa's in the restaurant... eh? A customer?]

While looking around, he noticed Croquette and was surprised.

[Isn't the restaurant closed on Saturdays? Oh well, welcome.]

Surprisingly, he remembered the words his grandmother, who was living together with him now, said to greet customers that came to the restaurant. He also lowered his head towards the strangely dressed man.

(Fumu, the owner's grandson?)

Croquette also recognized the boy's identity immediately.

The boy was dirty with mud, but he wore quite the strange clothes.

Short sleeved shirt with mysterious patterns weaved into it and short pants showing his hairless thin legs.

White shoes made of strange materials different from leather and socks dirty with mud.

To Croquette, his clothes were different even from commoners or aristocrats.

Therefore, if he was a person of another world, that was this world, he would be related to the owner.

[Umu. It's unfortunate, but the owner is out for a bit. I was told that he was out to buy something.]

To that extent, Croquette answered the boy's question.

[A, is that so? What a bummer, I even bring this with me.]

Hearing that, the boy lightly frowned and looked at what he brought.

[Fumu, what is that?]

He was bringing a sack made of transparent leather that was dirtied with mud.

It contained several things that varied in sizes from small to large.

It was something that Croquette had never seen before.

[What, it's the potatoes we raised for Home Economics class. I've dug all of them today. Sensei told me that the potatoes originate from Hokkaido.]

He had to answer the customer properly for the time being.

The boy thought and answered the question.

Harvesting potatoes planted in school fields during early spring.

He lived with his grandparents ever since his parents died, so he decided to bring his grandfather delicious potatoes that he harvested during class on Saturday morning, but he was out.

[Potatoes? Fumu, so it's a crop?]

Croquette understood the boy's explanation to an extent.

Though he didn't understand what Home Economics meant, he said that he brought the potatoes that he grew as part of his academic studies.

He then brought them to the owner.

It must be a crop that served as a cooking ingredient.

[E? Why are you asking such thing? So strange.]

[Umu, I'm hopeless with this kind of thing. Then what kind of food made from this that you like?]

To the boy who thought it was strange, Croquette nodded heavily.

This potato crop was not found in Croquette's world.

He did not know what kind of dishes this crop could be made into.

Croquette obediently asked the boy for his teaching.

And the boy thought a little while listing dishes using potatoes.

[E? There's a lot. Today I brought it for potato chips, but it's also included in curry and stew, it can also be used for tempura. Potato salad and fried potatoes are also good. Then there are meat and potatoes, croquettes...]









[E? Croquette!? Croquettes are made from these potatoes!?]

With his eyes wide open, Croquette asked the boy.

Croquette. Just like his nickname, it was the dish that he believed to be the most delicious food of otherworld cuisine.

It was natural for him to be surprised of its ingredient.

[You really don't know anything, huh, uncle? That's right. Grandpa said that croquettes are made from potatoes.]

Although the man was as old as his grandpa, he laughingly answered to the man who did not know about it.

[I see... so those potatoes are used to make croquettes...]

Croquette decided and told the boy.

[Boy, if you don't mind, can you give those potatoes to me? Of course, not for free.]

He took something from his pocket and handed it to the boy.

Normally, other than cooked food... the owner wouldn't sell food ingredients and seasonings that had wonderful different taste of otherworld.

If he thought about it, this was the opportunity to obtain croquettes even in his world.

[What is that? Some foreign money? It's rather fishy.]

The boy saw it and said in doubt.

The old man took out a coin made of gold to pay for the potatoes.

Even if it's round, it's somewhat more distorted compared to the usual 10 yen or 100 yen coin, and the surface was engraved with a picture of an old man similar to the person in front of him.

To the boy who thought that it was strange, the man nodded and spun his words.

[Umu. This is the gold coin of my country the Empire. In value, it's lower than Kingdom's gold coin and old elf gold coin, but no matter how cheap the currency exchange, it has a value of 1,000.]

The man pulled out another one that was familiar to the boy this time.

It was a piece of copper.

A different world copper. Perhaps it was engraved with a number or something on the face side, with a precise engraving of a temple that would be difficult to make even by skilled craftsman on the back side.

It was the "currency" that was exchange for the cooking of this restaurant.

It was a design that was too stiff for coppers, and he carried it around because he had no opportunity to use gold coins other than for this restaurant, but it was a copper coin.

If it's a copper coin, even a kid should know about it.

[Fu-n, 1,000 times of 10 yen is... e!? That's 10,000 yen!?]

Indeed, the boy knew its value.

He was surprised that the boy was able to find out its value so easily and precisely like the owner.

[Umu. That's right. It has the value of 10,000 yen. I would like to exchange this with the potatoes. Isn't it a nice deal?]

[Maa... un, I understand. This is the same thing if I return home. Un, I'll do it.]

With childlike arrogance, the boy accepted.

He received the gold coin and handed the bag of potatoes after putting the coin in his pocket.

[Trade is established.]

[Un. That's right.]

They made a good deal with each other.

They smiled and laughed at each other.

[Well, I'm going home. Tell the owner my best regards.]

The man stood up and left the restaurant.

The place where the man was located was just wilderness.

A fine black horse that was his favourite was tied to a nearby tree, waiting for its master.

[The fruit of potato... I just got the ingredient for croquette.]

The man laughed seeing the potatoes covered in soil inside the transparent bag.

[...Yoshi, cultivate it first.]

He loaded the potatoes on his horse while straddling his horse and made some calculations.

A court magician that was a priest of the Earth Goddess managed the administration of the court gardens and had succeeded in cultivating numerous medicinal herbs that was said to be impossible to be grown.

Even if it's an unknown crop, it would not be impossible for him to grow otherworld crop.

[When there's more, I'll secure enough to eat. I'll manage it.]

He did not know what sort of crop was needed to make otherworld cuisine, but if a child was able to raise it, it should be easy enough to cultivate, just a little... just enough for him to eat.

It would not be a great deal of trouble if the Empire's expert cultivated it in a large courtyard garden. If he failed, that's that.

For a man who fought only for the purpose of enlarging his country for many years, it was just for his selfishness before retirement, just a hobby.

[Anyway, it seems that the fruit grows in soil. At least I don't have to worry about it being eaten by birds.]

It would not be bothersome to divide it to other people if the number was sufficient.

Thinking about that, he galloped his horse.

...Croquette, the Empire's first emperor, Wilheilm, did not know yet.

That "hobby" was a great influence even for the existence of the Empire; it was counted as one of his greatest accomplishments in his life.

Cobbler's fruit. It was the fruit that came from the Country of God given to the emperor after a God lamented that his devout believers of the Empire were suffering from starvation as there were few wheat growing lands at the Empire. (The magicians that did not worship Gods said that it must be a crop that was magically developed by elves, but the elves had never heard of such crop before it was given to the emperor.)

Now, for ordinary people of the Empire, boiled Cobbler's fruit was the staple food instead of black bread made of wheat.

Currently, the Goddess with the most worshippers in the Empire was the Earth Goddess.

The Earth Goddess was the most powerful in fighting the undead, and at the same time, most of her followers remained in battle with the most wide-spread religion of the "Goddess Light" and blacksmiths that worshipped "Goddess of Fire".

Compared to the "Goddess of Darkness" that governed death and darkness, they were not good at fighting.

On the other hand, she was deeply believed at the rural areas to revive the grace of earth, the sprouting and growing of plants, and had the power to heal the diseases of earth in order to refine their field work.

It was an unreasonable story that was thickly believed in the Empire after the pioneering villages were able to successfully reclaim the land with "Cobbler's fruit".

And the priests of Earth Goddess understood its meaning well.

In the temple of the Earth Goddess, they treated the "Cobbler's fruit" as a source of their faith and the sacred food of the Empire, while deeply researching to discover the truth about it.

And one more thing, a new page was about to be engraved on the Empire's history of Cobbler's fruit.

In recent years, a new city of the Empire was created to be sought by the neighboring pioneer villages which were rapidly increasing in number.

Sophie, a righteous priestess of Earth Goddess that was appointed to the temple located in the city, had finished her duties and secretly went to a suburban forest to protect the secret of her destination.

(Aa, I'm so hungry... I have to reach there soon.)

About half of the trees had been chopped down and its stumps lined up side by side.

There was a brand new wooden hut that seemed to be hurriedly constructed.

It was a place where no one came as the imperial officials had deemed chopping more trees to be forbidden as they forest would disappear otherwise.

All trees at a select location had been chopped down to create the gigantic city made mainly from stone that Sophie came from so she strolled in the surrounding forest... and found the door.

A black door with a picture of a cat.

With her chest swelling with expectation, Sophie opened the door.

[...Hello. I came again, Adelia.]

'Chirinchirin', while listening to the sound of bell, Sophie looked around the restaurant and found her "acquaintance" that's waving her hand.

A foreign priestess who also worshipped the Earth Goddess.

To Sophie who was born at the Empire and had many demon acquaintances, it did not bother her that Adelia was a therianthrope with dog ears and tail.

She did not hesitate to call Adelia, a gentle priestess that withstood harsh training, as a friend.

[Un, hi.]

On the other hand, Adelia who was a veteran priestess greeted her while eating her favourite omelet that contained Cobbler's fruit.



She recommended a chair with her gaze and swallowed the omelet after confirming that Sophie had sat obediently.

[My brother brought me some money. I finally got it. He'll come again by the time the moon changes, so I'll introduce you at that time.]

After swallowing the omelet in her mouth, Adelia explained her circumstances to her new foreign friend.

It's rare for humans to serve the Green Goddess instead of the White Goddess that was the guardian of human race.

Adelia thought that the teachings were different as she did not know the technique of turning her body into a dragon, but on the other hand, her ability was not inferior and was good at managing the grace of the earth.

Priestesses of similar ages that worshiped the same Goddess.

It was no surprise that they got along.

[Welcome. Would you like to place an order?]

After sitting on the chair and chatting about recent events, Aletta came to ask Sophie.

[Un. As usual, potato chips with beer please! Season with salt, nori¹ and cheese please!]

As soon as she heard it, Sophie gave her order.

[Yes! Please wait a moment!]

Aletta took the orders and returned to the kitchen.

It was shortly afterwards she came back with her orders.

While she was chatting idly with Adelia and got a bit of the omelet from her (after she asked for a trade), her order came.

[Thank you for waiting! Here are your potato chips with beer!]

The fried Cobbler's fruit served in a large plate and golden bubbling alcohol were placed in front of Sophie.



[Please enjoy.]

[Un. I'll call you again if I want to order more.]

After she said such, she prayed while grasping her silvery holy sign amulet.

[Yoshi... our Goddess who watches over the earth. Thank you for bringing fruits and food to us.]

After dedicating a prayer before meal to the Goddess of earth, Sophie reached for the food without using any utensils.

(Un. It's different from fried after all.)

First, salt.

It was the simplest familiar taste.

She carried it to her mouth while feeling the same burning heat of fried potatoes from her fingertips.

The moment she chewed, the potato chip crumbled with a pleasant feel.

'Crunch, crunch', the flavor of high quality Cobbler's fruit and oil was transmitted along with the crisp sound.

They mixed with the salt and resounded in her stomach.

(U~n, fried potatoes should be the “skin” after all.)

Sophie realized that her thoughts were increasingly true while gulping down the bubbly beer.

The real value of fried potatoes in the Empire was its skin.

That was Sophie’s belief.

Sofie’s parents ran a “fried potatoes” stall at the capital city.

The two types of fried potatoes were one that had moisture of oil and an “interior” that fleetingly collapsed while the other one was fried in oil until it had a crunchy “skin”. Although the Empire’s opinions were divided between the two, Sophie herself was part of the crunchy skin faction.





That's why potato chips which became only the "skin" by thinly cutting the potatoes was very delicious to her with its slight ingenuity.

(It's so delicious!)

In addition, if she asked for a large portion in this restaurant, she could have three different kinds of seasonings.

One was simply salt.



The other was a mixture of different world herb called nori which had a distinctive flavor that was compatible with salt.



At the end was a mixture of cheese grounded until it turned into fine powder, giving it the richness of dairy products.



She tasted them one after another while feeling its burning heat and drinking cold beer.

[Un. These potatoes are indeed deep-fried.]

Even for a foreign therianthrope, it was exceptional.

Then, Sophie chatted with Adelia while drinking beer.

The topics ranged from serious topic about faith, daily life small events, male preference and so on.

If they kept talking for a while, the potato chips would cool down, but that's no problem.

Potato chips were delicious even if they're cold.

Fried potatoes were made from cutting Cobbler's fruit in slices and frying in oil, which were popular in the Empire, but the taste degenerated when they're cold.

Particularly in the case of its skin; the moisture of Cobbler's fruit leaked to the outside and softened the texture, and the taste degenerated at once.

However, the potato chips which were the new fried potatoes were different.

Although there's a problem of losing its crispiness after a few days if it's takeaway, the advantages were that she could eat it steadily without losing its texture even if it's cold and there's no need to worry about burns.

In such circumstances, Sophie talked with her friend until sunset while enjoying beer with potato chips.

Nightfall, Sophie who went back to the forest returned to the temple with a light gait.

(The food is delicious and recently my father said that the economy is good in his letters, it's awesome!)

Initially, she was reluctant to leave the capital city to work in a start-up city for many years, but she could eat potato chips from different world and life even brought great

luck, so Sophie considered.

Yes, after knowing a lot about potato chips, she told about it to her parents in a letter.

Simply frying thinly sliced Cobbler's fruit, potato chips were a dish that no one in the Empire had ever seen before.

It had the same reputation as fried potatoes but it was a different dish, so it brought big profit for her parents.

Recently, there's trouble as some other stalls tried to imitate the potato chips, but as a stall that produced the "first potato chips", it still had sales that was not even comparable to before.

(Maa, the original seller was the otherworld dining hall...)

Sophie was pleased with her parents' prosperity though she smiled wryly at the beginning.

A dish of different world, a new dish that also used the sacred Cobbler's fruit.

That brought great luck to her parents.

After all, the Cobbler's fruit was great.

Sophie further deepened her belief on the Goddess of Earth by that fact.

1. Nori – Seaweed

CHAPTER 71

CHEESECAKE ONCE AGAIN



Empire-based female demon mercenary, "Night Run", Hilda was visiting that forest again on that day.

[Un. It's there today.]

She checked that the black door was at its usual place and when she tried to grasp the handle, a voice called out suddenly.

[Oi, oi, what is that bizarre door? Why is it in such a place?]

[Maa, it seems that she knows its purpose.]

A crude tone of Empire language and polite words of a woman with Western Continent accent.

[Na!? Why the heck are you here!?]

She turned around with her favourite crossbow on firing position and was dismayed with the presences in “reachable distance” in literal sense.

There were two women.

[What, there seems to be something in your mind. I can see it.]

[Is it not like you? You don't notice our approach.]

...They were Hilda's brethren, demons with the same power as hers.

The “Female Bear” Alicia who had the arms of a bear complete with its strength as her blessing, she had crushed many enemies with her favourite battle axe and her strong arms.

With her beautiful brown skin and dubious charm of Western Continent, she had gecko's fingers that could stick even on ceilings and poisonous snake fangs that were able to kill even demons when she coated her daggers with her poison, “Venomous Snake” Ranija who assassinated her enemies.

Even in the Empire that had many female demon mercenaries, there were not many others that had useful “blessing” like Hilda.

The strength of a demon depended on the blessing bestowed by the Demon God that governed infinite life and chaos.

For a demon, their blessing was more important than their age or sex.

In the past when demons were regarded as “enemy of the world”, their blessings gave them devastating power.

Some had big horns that produced magical powers surpassing humans and at the same time had a neck of a goat that enabled them to use more than one magic at a time.

One had a hard shell of a bug that could reflect thousands of arrows with bug wings that were able to fly for a long time.

One was a basilisk with petrifying eyes of a gorgon and killing breath...

However, the blessings of the Demon God were fickle and sometimes produced weak demon children without much protection while vice versa produced the demon king with enough blessing to dominate the demons and match an army of one thousand.

Because of that power, the demons destroyed the old Kingdom that was the oldest human country and continued to wage war with the humans for around 500 years.

...70 years ago, humans continued to fight with the demons, until the four assassins (heroes) managed to defeat the Evil God.

Now that the Evil God was defeated by the humans, the blessings given by the god were weakened, though it was not rare for some demons to have strong blessing like the "Lion King".

That's why like Hilda, the three people were aware of each other and even intermingled.

[Maa, you're suspicious lately. It seems that you've been receiving jobs that entailed visiting this remote forest although there's no use.]

[That's right. I think that the first goblin extermination job was good for you, but all the other jobs were just underling works for novices. We're a bit worried.]

She guessed it's because they're such ladies. Hilda's movements were suspicious.

Hilda was now a famous mercenary.

Naturally, the works accepted also had high degree of difficulty, so they were good jobs.

Such Hilda did not accumulate money as soon as possible, but had only received cheap jobs for a certain place.

They thought that there was something to it, so they followed her.

[So, what is that door? Is it an entrance to some ruins?]

[No, it's different.]

To Alicia's words, Hilda pondered and shook her head.

The fact was that she had blundered and they had seen the door.

It would be difficult to “monopolize” this place any longer.

[Beyond this is the otherworld dining hall... a place where we can get confectionaries for cheap.]

From that idea, Hilda easily explained to them.

[Haa!? So the secret is sweets!?]

[Maa, maa, it seems interesting. It looks like Hilda is obsessed with sweets.]

They couldn't believe it so easily.

‘Chirinchirin’, with the sound of bell, the three of them passed through the door.

[A, welcome, Hilda-san. The ones you’re travelling with, nice to meet you.]

At first, Aletta noticed the familiar customer. She was surprised that she brought two friends together, but she smiled and cheerfully greeted them.

First impression was important for serving in a restaurant.

[Aa, I’ve come again. Sorry to trouble you, but bring me a menu please.]

[Yes, please wait a moment.]

Hilda always ordered soufflé cheesecake so she did not use the menu anymore, but today she brought companions.

So they sat on a table and waited for the menu.

[Still, a different world restaurant that offers confectionaries... no, there are interesting people here too.]

While looking inside the restaurant, she confirmed that there were demons customers among the humans and her ferocious smile deepened.

(Indeed, this is a different world. If these people were to gather in one place, they’ll definitely kill each other.)

Alicia who had strong fighting instinct imagined the scene and licked her lips.

[Ee, I doubt my eyes a little truly.]

Ranija also looked around and doubted her eyes a little.

Based on the brown skin and handsome facial features, that's the first prince of the Sand Country and his sister that were chatting with the Empire's princess.

(I see. I heard the story that the Sand Country recently is trying to befriend the Empire, but it's this kind of thing.)

Ranija saw the truth of the gossip circling in the back society at a strange place.

This restaurant was strange.

The two new customers came to the same conclusion.

[Sorry to keep you waiting. Here's the menu.]

The menu was brought by a neat looking female demon with weak blessing.

[Aa, thank you... here, you two. The dishes of this restaurant are listed here. I recommend the cheesecake.]

She received it and opened it for them.

[Fu~un. So this is the otherworld confection that's you're obsessed with.]

[There's a lot. Even the cheesecake has three different variations.]

They looked at the dessert section.

[Aa, the sweets here are really delicious. I've bought a confection from a shop that has the best reputation in the capital before, but I was disappointed. The confections here are many times better.]

Even though the price was ten times more expensive, she continued with a laugh.

[Maa, I don't know what's good. Sweets, when was the last time I ate it.]

[That's true. Sugar is expensive in the Empire.]

Alicia said while being slightly amazed at Hilda who delightfully ate the sweets here.

[Oi! Over there! I want to order! Bring me one each of these three cheesecakes!]

[Yes! Thank you very much.]

Anyway, she did not know which cheesecake was delicious, so she asked for all kinds.

Alicia did not have much education so she didn't know the exact price, but one slice can be bought by several copper coins.

Even if she ordered it, it wouldn't cost a lot.

[Well, I'm interested with the confections here. Let's compare it.]

The other two agreed with Alicia's proposal.

And the orders were arranged in front of them.

[Thank you for waiting. Here are your three kinds of cheesecake.]

Three slices of cakes were lined up on one plate.

Though they were cheesecakes, their appearances were different. "Rare" was pure white, "baked" was fox-coloured while "soufflé" swelled softer than "baked".



Rare Cheesecake



Baked Cheesecake



© katya lyukum

Souffle Cheesecake

[Well then, let's eat.]

To Alicia's words, Hilda and Ranija nodded. They picked up a fork and started eating.

The first one that Alicia tried was the baked cheesecake.

(Oo, certainly this thing is delicious!)

Alicia stabbed the fork into the cake and ate about half of the slice in one bite.

With the taste spreading in her mouth, she was now convinced why Hilda was keenly addicted with this.

A cake with slight flavor on its surface and massive heavy texture crumbled softly in her mouth.

The flavor of slightly sour cheese mixed with the taste of fine sugar inside the crumbling cake. Arranged on the surface was sliced orange peel boiled in sugar giving pleasant sweetness to its acidity and bitterness.



If the cheese was seasoned with sugar and then baked, that would be pleasant enough.

While knowing what she had not known before, Alicia flattened the cake in three bites.

(It's not enough. I want more.)

She thought such.

Ranija reached for the rare cheesecake first.

(Ara, this is not baked?)

Ranija who noticed with her unique observation eyes cut the edge and looked at it a little curiously.

A white mysterious confection.

It was different from the other two as there's no indication of heating, it just firmly hardened.

(Maa, I'll know after I eat it.)

Although she hesitated a little after remembering a slimy feeling, royalty visited this restaurant.

It won't serve strange things.

Never mind, she carried it to her mouth.

(...Maa. Is this cheese I wonder?)

She was surprised by its texture.

It was smooth as silk and melted in her mouth.

Compared to the sweets she had eaten, the sweetness was thin, but it's good.

Also, the cheese used for the cheesecake melting in her mouth was different from the cheeses that she knew.

It was fresh, the taste of milk was strong and its acidity was stronger than normal cheese, but it's delicious.

Though it's somewhat similar to yogurt, the taste was definitely cheese.

Ranija did not know that there's such cheese.

(Indeed, because of this cheese, this red fruit suits it well.)



Matched with the cake were red berries.

The very sweet fruit with little acidity was in harmony with the rare cheesecake with its strong acidity.

In addition, the red berries on top of the cheesecake was boiled in sugar and crushed.

(Fufu. It seems that they like it.)

Hilda was surprised and pleased that they liked the cheesecakes. She proceeded to eat her favourite soufflé cheesecake and they ate silently.

With its soft flavor and texture, the sweet and sour taste of soft cheesecake were complimented by the sweet blueberries.



She did not get tired of this taste no matter how many times she ate it.

She thought that the other two were also delicious, but the soufflé cheesecake was the most exceptional.

...She did not know yet.

Her companions thought that their selected cheesecake was more delicious than soufflé cheesecake.

And they fought to determine which one was more delicious.

...The three female demon mercenaries who were famous even in the Empire.

It would be a while until they could formally start working together once again.

CHAPTER 72

OYAKODON



Born and raised in the mountains, Hachirou who was a travelling performer continued his journey by performing various shows at the villages and towns scattered among the mountainous area.

With his handmade map on hand and the sun just starting to rise, he cautiously walked on a dim mountain path.

The mountain roads were dangerous even if one were used to travelling.

If one took one wrong step, falling down a valley and losing their life was not uncommon. Not to mention the woods that covered the mountains were inhabited by dangerous beasts, monsters and beastmen that would attack approaching travelers.

The criminals who committed sin and were unable to stay in a village would settle in the woods where the eyes of samurai couldn't reach and became thieves that attacked innocent travelers. Those pitiful travelers would then turn into undeads due to their grudge.

The saying that “the mountain paths lead to hell” expressed the ruggedness of such roads.

(Mom and Dad should be just fine...)

However, while walking on such steep road, Hachirou’s face was sunny though he was sweating.

When spring was over and summer was coming, Hachirou went to see “Dad” and “Mom”.

Today was exactly that day.

[Finally arrived...]

When the day was now completely bright, Hachirou had reached his destination.

In front of Hachirou’s eyes was a door... black with the picture of a cat.

He carefully wiped his sweat with his towel, made sure that the sun had reached its peak and grasped the door’s handle.

‘Chirinchirin’, while the bell rang, Hachirou went through the door.

(They haven’t come yet...)

Quickly, he looked over the inside of the restaurant where “strange people” were hanging out and became a little uneasy when he did not see the intended people.

(By any chance... no, no way.)

He had promised with his dad and mom that they would meet up again next year at early summer afternoon.

In other words, he would use the “door” scattered throughout the country and would meet those two again in a year.

Their old wrinkled faces when they met last year crossed his mind and made him uneasy, but he shook his head to throw it away.

(It’s okay. They just happened to be late.)

It’s not easy to die.

He told himself he would eat and drink while he waited.

[Welcome to Western Restaurant Nekoya. Is this your first time?]

He wondered if it's because he was standing on the entranceway while thinking various things.

Looking at the "newcomer" was a demon girl with black horns sprouting from her blonde hair wearing otherworld clothes that boldly showed her legs and was not here last year...

Hachirou assumed that she worked as this restaurant's waitress.

[No. It's just that it's been a year since I last visited.]

He was puzzled by the girl's appearance that was neat enough even for the capital city but he managed to reply.

'Chirinchirin', the bell rang as a sign that someone just came inside.

[Fuu. I don't want to get older. It takes so long to climb that cliff.]

[I guess... oya, it's Hachirou. We've kept you waiting.]

He leapt to his feet when he heard their voices.

[Mom! Dad!]

Hachirou hugged both of them.

[Oo. Stop it. It's only a year, how embarrassing.]

[Indeed, Hachirou still seems like a child even now.]

Though they said that, they stroked Hachirou lovingly.

A cute son that's double their height.

When Hachirou was just a child that just started to become aware of his surroundings, he was abandoned at the mountains to reduce the amount of mouths to be fed. Then, a travelling married Halfling couple picked him up as their child.

They taught Hachirou who knew nothing but his birth village how to walk on the mountain paths, how to protect himself, the technique of street performance for a living, and they continued to travel together for 10 years.

And when 10 years had passed and Hachirou had grown up into a splendid young man that could travel independently, "Mom" and "Dad" split up from Hachirou as was natural for Halflings and went back to the carefree journey of husband and wife.

[Hey, hey, it's time to let go.]

[That's right. We have not eaten anything in the morning and are now hungry.]

[Aa, is that so...]

To those words, Hachirou let go of the embarrassed couple.

[Ou. The girl over there, you, you're a waitress of this restaurant, right? Lead us to a table.]

[Since we're hungry, please give us the menu right away.]

They guessed it in a moment. The two asked the waitress.

[Yes, this way please.]

While he smiled wryly at the two, the waitress cheerfully guided them to a table.

[Well then, I'll bring the menu now.]

[A, wait a moment.]

They were guided to a table and stopped the waitress from immediately going to grab the menu.

[Yes, is something the matter?]

[Sorry for being immediate, I want to order now.]

When Hachirou said so, the other two nodded.

Yes, there were a variety of food here and all of them were delicious. His parents ate so much despite their old age but they had already decided their first order.

[We want three oyakodon. Serve immediately please.]

That was the travelling Halflings' favourite and it was a taste of nostalgia for Hachirou.

Then, the three of them talked about the past year.

[What, you made it to the Sand Country!?]

[Ou, it's so hot it made me dizzy.]

[I've been there several times already, it's as sandy as always.]

The two people turned away from each other and faced Hachirou.

Halflings spend their life on their journeys.

Therefore, it's not uncommon for them to visit all the countries of a continent.

The two people in front of him were such people.

[That's a lie. It's rare for a Halfling to travel beyond the sea.]

[It's not. We travelled to that place with a ship back when we were young. The journey was so terribly tedious and I don't want to repeat it again.]

That's why the words of these two people were interesting since who knew what kind of things they would say.

[I see. The Mountain Country is as usual. A, but I heard that the road where the ogre couple had settled were secured by the capital's subjugation force, so there's no more ogres there.]

He said while being overwhelmed by their story.

They chatted about their last year's experiences.

It lasted until the owner that they had not seen in a year brought their order.

[Looks delicious as ever.]

[Let's eat before it cools down.]

The couple picked up their chopsticks and opened the lids of the bowls.

[Maa, such a nice smell.]

[Yeah, my belly always replies to this smell no matter how many times I eat this.]

Fuu~, while squinting at the two who started to gobble their food, Hachirou also opened the lid of his bowl.

The sweet and savoury scent tickled his nose.

Feeling his stomach tightening to that scent, he gulped his drool, picked up his chopsticks and looked at the food.



The one that was visible was the vivid yellow egg colour.

This dish was called oyakodon, a luxurious different world cuisine with chicken meat and eggs on pure white rice.

(Aa, how beautiful.)

He enjoyed the beauty with his eyes, the scent with his nose and the weight with his palms. He had no choice but to eat after that.

Hachirou gently scooped the food.

On his chopsticks, the large pieces of meat of chicken with its fatty skin was cooked with moderate fire and enveloped by the vivid eggs. The pure white rice laid as its foundation was stained brown by the sauce.

Brilliant green and white spring onions added colouring and it appealed to Hachirou

as delicious.

Hachirou couldn't resist it anymore and ate the oyakodon.

(Aa...)

At the moment it entered his mouth, the oyakodon began to unravel.

Spreading in his mouth was the food's complex umami.

The fatty flavor of chicken skin, the umami of chicken meat, the refreshing texture of spring onions and the sweetness of the rice stained by the sauce.

They entertained and amused his tongue.

(I can't help it... really.)

Even while his eyes watered involuntarily due to its taste, Hachirou continued to chew thoroughly.

When he was abandoned by his birth parents and picked up by his mom and dad, he became severely obsessed with the fact that he was left to die.

His mom and dad then pulled the hands of young Hachirou through the door.

And in this mysterious restaurant, the three of them ate the oyakodon made by the old owner.

To Hachirou who gobbled his food and forgot about his bad mood, the couple narrowed their eyes at him and said.

—This food is called oyakodon. Parents and child, eating together.

—That's right. It's like parents and their child eating their rice bowl together at the same table.

Their words soothed young Hachirou's tattered heart and the gray world regained its colour.

From that day onwards, the two small Halflings became Hachirou's parents.

(Aa, it's unsatisfactory. I can't put up with it anymore.)

When he fully tasted his first bite, his stomach growled loudly.

It wanted more.

Of course Hachirou listened to it.

He directly lifted the bowl to his mouth and devoured his food just like his parents.

Occasionally, he would reach out to the complimentary miso soup to moisten his throat, but he couldn't stop his hands and continued to eat his food.

Then the three of them finished eating almost simultaneously.

[Fuu, I ate it.]

[First, let's have a drink.]

They put down their chopsticks satisfactorily and his parents reached for the menu naturally.

[Well then, what to order next?]

Hachirou also looked at the menu and pondered on what to order next.

Even though they're old, the tiny Halflings had huge stomach capacity.

At any rate, just one bowl of donburi was not enough.

[What to choose...]

[So many choices...]

Regardless of their stomach, their pockets still had a limit, so they're worried about their orders.

Such a happy parents and child time slowly passed.

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1. Oyakodon(親子丼), literally “parent-and-child donburi”, is a donburi, or Japanese rice bowl dish, in which chicken, egg, sliced scallion (or sometimes regular onions), and other ingredients are all simmered together in a kind of soup which is made with soy sauce and stock, and then served on top of a large bowl of rice.

CHAPTER 73

MORNING ONCE AGAIN



When they finished the last cleaning at 10 p.m., the business of otherworld dining hall ended.

[Ou, another tiring day. Here, today's share.]

To Aletta who changed into her own beautiful clothes that she splurged to buy at early spring after her shower, he handed out a brown envelope that contained her wage of 12 silver coins.

[Yes! Thank you very much! ...Eh?]

Aletta tilted her head after noticing that the paper bag was heavier than usual.

The owner told Aletta the reason with a little satisfaction.

[Aa, that's right. I forgot to tell you... I increased your wage from today. It's twelve silver coins per day now.]

[...Ee!? Is that fine!?]

At first, Aletta was unable to comprehend the meaning of those words. When she did, she exclaimed in surprise.

As it was normal for wages to decrease, she had never experienced an increase of salary before.

That's why Aletta did not think that it was possible for this job's salary, which was already high in the first place, to increase.

But apparently the owner was serious. He continued to speak with a smile.

[Ou, you've worked with me for a year now and had performed really well.

That's why it's fine to increase you salary a little.]

In fact, Aletta had been doing really well from the owner's point of view.

She had never mistaken the customer's order, and the plates that she had dropped and broke into pieces could be counted with the fingers of both hands.

At first, her hospitality was stiff due to tension, but she recently had become accustomed to serving the various customers.

(Besides, I would be troubled if her salary remains that cheap.)

He did not really understand the otherworld, but Aletta looked like a high school student and was now indispensable for Saturday business.

It's too cheap for her wage to be 700 yen per hour when she worked for 14 hours from the store opening to its closing.

It was also the reason why he increased her wage.

[Is that so. Then, thank you very much.]

She listened to the owner's story and thanked him deeply.

She felt like she's still dreaming.

Compared to a year ago, she was blessed now.

Aletta felt that way.

[Well, good work today.]

With care, the owner handed the takeaway bag to Aletta.

[Yes, thank you very much!]

Aletta also took care of that immediately. She took a silver coin from her payment, handed it to the owner and received the bag.

Aletta seemed to have been asked by some customers of otherworld (a female regular that came to order minced cutlet around once or twice a month) to deliver takeaway.



Cookie can of Flying Puppy which she bought every week ever since he gave it to her for "congratulations on finding employment" for the first time.



Today was the favourite of Aletta's employer, Minced Cutlet Sandwich, who couldn't come when she's in town.

And...

[Eh, this, what is this?]

Aletta tilted her head seeing the unfamiliar silver cylinder in the bag.

It was something slightly warm that she had never seen before.

[Aa, that's a bonus. Sorry that it's just a leftover of the restaurant.]

He told the content to Aletta.

[Please wash and return the container when you come next time, for the content...]

The owner told her.

It was the name of the first otherworld dish that Aletta had ever eaten.

When Sarah, a treasure hunter mainly working at the capital, woke up due to the sweet scent drifting from the kitchen, the day was already quite bright.

[A, that's right... I fell asleep before Aletta came back yesterday...]

She wiped the ink marks from her cheek and grasped the situation with the speed of a treasure hunter while picking up the blanket that Aletta probably draped over her when she fell asleep.

On her working desk were a magic lamp she used for her adventure that emitted faint light and a notebook that she read repeatedly.

And a bunch of parchments that she used to write down things.

That clearly represented Sarah's work.

The notebook that she received from her older cousin when they met each other for the first time in 10 years at the otherworld dining hall.

In his notebook, the information of "Southern Continent" where he wandered around for the past decade was written down with brand new ink.

And the one returned to Sarah after she handed it to her aunt and uncle as a proof that her cousin was still alive.

To say, she wanted a clean fair copy that she could read.

Sarah did not understand it.

For treasure hunters, information was only second to their life and they took various measures to protect it.

And the easiest way to do so was "characters that was ineligible and could only be read by themselves".

Of course, if it's too ineligible it would be impossible even for them to read so moderation was necessary, but the characters in her cousin's notebook was still ineligible.

As an educated daughter of a successful merchant family, Sarah could write beautifully, but the letters in her notebooks were usually intentionally wrote in such a way that amateurs couldn't decrypt it.

And her cousin was more experienced and skillful than Sarah, so naturally the code

was harder.

In addition, when it came to the part where the encryption was combined with her great grandfather's cipher, Sarah would be needed by the Gold family.

In such circumstances, Sarah undertook the job of decrypting the information left by her cousin as her aunt and her husband did not have "William's curse".

The remuneration given to her by her wealthy magical tools merchant aunt and uncle were considerable, and it was also a great thanks to Sarah for having the chance to carefully inspect the information of "Southern Continent".

Sarah received the request immediately and in the last few dozens of days, the information she had decrypted were organized and written beautifully.

[Aa, hungry...]

Yesterday she had only eaten hard black bread with cheese and water, so she left the room while feeling hungry.

In the kitchen, Aletta had lit up a stove for cooking and was stirring a pot.

Her well-maintained and beautiful blonde hair with its black horns was swaying.

[A, good morning! Breakfast will be done soon, so please wait a moment.]

She noticed Sarah standing on the entrance of the kitchen and she greeted Sarah with a cheerful smile while being careful so as to not burn the bread and cheese.

[Un. Thanks. By the way, the soup in that pot...]

Sarah asked about the sweet scent from that pot with some expectation.

[Yes! The owner gave me some corn potage yesterday! I'll divide it with you.]

Sarah answered that expectation with disappointment.

On Sarah's small table, the meal for two people lined up and they sat at a same time.

Usually an employee did not eat with their employer, but Sarah did not care about that.

Rather, it's better to eat with company rather than eating alone.

[Demon God... thank you for the food today too.]

Before the meal, Aletta prayed as usual.

When she just came to the capital, she did not do so as she was hiding her identity as a demon, but she was now praying properly ever since she quitted hiding her race.

(Even so, the scripture of prayer was different every time...)

Aletta usually did not seem like a demon and she only prayed before her meals.

Even if she was not educated by a professional priest or there's no fixed verse for the Evil God, her words of prayer were slightly different each time.

Sarah began to eat while thinking that it's the way of demons.

Toasted black bread served on wooden plate.



(Un. It's quite different when it's just toasted.)

The burned hard surface and fragrant scent of wheat.

Freshly baked bread was the best but it's quite different when it's re-toasted.

When one's not careful, the surface would be burned to black and was extremely bitter, but this was quite tasty though it's not as tasty as the white bread she ate at her parent's house or at the restaurant.

After enjoying bread just like that, she placed the warmed cheese on it and bit it.



When the taste of thick cheese was added, just that was good enough.

It was a staple in the middle of an adventure to eathardtack with cheese little by little.

(Actually, I wish I can have that berries boiled in sugar water.)

Sweet enough that it's wonderful on bread, that sweet and sour berries boiled in sugar water was finished in no time.



It was really delicious.

Normally, she would share half of it with her sister that was using Aletta as a courier (properly paying her with money) to buy sweets of otherworld (it was quite valuable as one would expect from its glass bottle and metal lid). It was a preserved food but it fit with bread and matched with tea so it was finished quickly.

It's too bad that it's not for sale.

(Well then...)

After correcting her mind and enjoying her bread, she reached for the yellow soup... corn potage served in a bowl.



The plates, bowls and cutleries they used were made of cheap wood, but it's somewhat sophisticated when she scooped the soup with a spoon and drank it without making a sound.

(It's kind of sweet.)

The faint sweetness spread in her mouth.

The soup made of milk and sweet vegetables had sweetness unlike fruits that made her stomach warm.

(Un... if the sweetness is enough, it's already delicious.)

When she was at her parents' home, she did not like the overly sweet food that made her head and tooth hurt. Rather, she preferred the sweetness of knight's sauce.

Also, this soup was not just sweet. If she tasted it well, she could discern proper saltiness, smooth taste of milk, taste of Oranie, and the underlying complex flavours used by the restaurant for its soups other than miso soup.

(I mean, this is considered as free.)

As always, the soup rolled in her mouth unlike minced cutlet and she enjoyed the flavors soaked by the soup.

Slightly warm black bread soaked up the corn potage and slightly changed its flavor.

When she ate it, it was soft and she could enjoy it along with the absorbed corn potage every time she chewed.

(Un. It's delicious.)

She enjoyed the soup well enough... in addition, Sarah smiled and put down her spoon on seeing Aletta watching the last bowl with desire.

She smiled wryly at Aletta who seemed openly relieved with her state of affairs.

This soup was delicious, but it would be somewhat better for this lovable servant.

In addition...

[That's right. Did you buy it?]

[Yes! I bought the minced cutlet sandwich! I'll heat up for your lunch later!]



Because a feast was waiting for her lunch.

CHAPTER 74

COFFEE JELLY



The ruthless sun that casted the light of death across the dessert had left the earth.

When the area was steeped in the twilight of night, Aleph, a magician who lived for many years in the oasis town of Sand Country, heavily got up and stretched his body.

[...Light.]

He held out his left hand and called out a mass of orange light that hovered on the palm of his hand.

[Umu, I slept well.]

While stroking his messy beard that one would hardly say was neatly trimmed, he murmured and went to fetch his sandals.

The magical light that lit various parts of the city showed the usual town merchants and desert lizards walking under the light.

The merchants and government officials of the Empire of the Eastern Continent (it seemed to be a country that equaled with the Kingdom though it was just about 50 years old) recently started to visit the town and was surprised to see the “night view” very much, although it was normal for commoners of the Sand Country to memorize the chanting of one or two simple magic even if they couldn’t read.

[Well, I’m hungry...]

Drifting among the stalls while stroking his empty belly, his nose was attracted to the smell of cooked fish.

When he thought about it, he had not eaten anything after he ate the thin bread he bought this morning.

[...Oo, today’s Satur’s day if I remember correctly.]

With his hunger, Aleph noticed that and hurried to that place.

He went through the crowd and entered one of the vacant houses in the city.

Nothing lived there for several years, a sad vacant house.

The ceiling had collapsed and a black door was illuminated by the moonlight that spilled in from the hole.

(Umu, it’s as powerful as usual.)

A few years ago, Aleph who was a magician with enough knowledge to be called a wiseman found this door after he noticed the strange magical power leaking out of the vacant house.

Originating from the ancient time when the great desert of Sand Country was created, this door that held the magic of elves.

When he first found the flow of magical power, he came through the door due to his curiosity.

‘Chirinchirin’, he went through the door while feeling hungry.

Spreading beyond the door was a bright restaurant in a different world than the city

illuminated with magical lights.

Several people in the restaurant... according to Aleph's knowledge, a wide range of the customers came from Eastern Continent as well as monsters from all over the world enjoying their food.

While watching them, Aleph sat on an appropriate seat.

[Welcome. Here are your water and towel.]

Immediately, a demon waitress of Eastern Continent brought clear water that was valuable at the desert and towel soaked in hot water.

[Aa, thank you. I would like to order immediately please. Today's set menu with bread. Espresso for before meal and coffee jelly after the meal.]

He ordered as usual.

Bread, soup and daily set, otherworld style Kaffa (which was called coffee for some reason) and dessert of hardened Kaffa.

These three items were Aleph's usual order.

[Yes, please wait a moment. For now, I'll serve your espresso right away.]

[Aa, please.]

Aleph nodded satisfactorily to confirm the waitress.

At first, she was awkward with each of the customers, but thanks to her firm effort, she was able to polish her customer service.

Shortly afterwards, his Kaffa was served.

[Thank you for waiting. Here's your espresso.]



A white cup with handle placed on a small white plate.

The cup was full of jet-black Kaffa with a fragrant scent.

(Umu, it's a good scent. They're using fine beans.)

After enjoying the fragrance, he took the sugar jar and opened the lid.

The white sugar heaped on the silver spoon dropped into the smooth black Kaffa and he mixed it using the small spoon served with the drink.

He did not put in milk; he just lifted the cup and sipped it little by little.

A strong Kaffa scent, its acidity and bitter taste along with sweet sugar were mixed in the cup.

(This "strong" Kaffa can only be drunk in this store after all.)

To that taste, Aleph's cheeks loosened a little.

Just like other men of Sand Country, Aleph loved Kaffa.

That intense aroma and taste, when he drank it, there's a good feeling caressing his head.

As he did not like liquor since it made his movement dull, when he wanted a drink that did not moisturize his throat, he always chose Kaffa.

This otherworld Espresso Kaffa had a strong taste.

(It's not just the beans that are good. I wonder what special way they did to make this.)

In the otherworld, there were various ways to enjoy Kaffa.

Ordinarily, the method to make Kaffa was to put powdered roasted Kaffa into a cloth bag and boiled it in hot water (the Sand Country was also familiar with mixing it with milk of domesticated animals). It was a way to drink cold beverage other than water drawn out from the well but there was no way to Kaffa strong enough as this espresso.

It could be said that Aleph visited the restaurant for its wide variety of Kaffa.

And he finished his enjoyable espresso.

[Sorry to keep you waiting. Today's daily set is assortment of croquettes and deep-fried shrimps.]





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[Aa, thanks.]

His order arrived and Aleph picked up the cutleries.

And when his food was finished and his belly filled with soft white bread and soup.

[Excuse me, please serve the dessert now.]

He asked for the after meal dessert from the passing by waitress.

[Ye~s, please wait a moment.]

As she said so, the girl went back to the kitchen for a while.

[Thank you for waiting. Here's your coffee jelly.]

She served it to Aleph.

[Umu, thanks.]

Aleph looked at the food in front of him.



Wide glass cup filled with square-shaped black confection.

It's a bad way to say that it looked like a slime sliced finely into Aleph's favourite dessert.

(Well, my belly is satisfied. It's time to enjoy this.)

He stroked his full belly and picked up a spoon.

To eat something truly delicious, one's belly must be filled.

That was Aleph's commitment.

Hunger made everything delicious. Even hardened bread and cool Kaffa tasted good when hungry. {TN: it means hot coffee that had already cooled down.}

That's why he must eat this when his belly was full.

When one ate not to fill his belly but to enjoy the taste, delicious food was truly delicious.

(First off, one by one.)

After a glimpse to the small pot filled with cream beside the cup, he ate without

pouring it.

He scooped up a small square and ate it.

(Umu, delicious.)

The taste of Kaffa with its unique texture and slight sweetness was different from the normal drink.

It's cold though not as cold as ice cream.

He chewed it and enjoyed the flavor in his mouth for a while before swallowing it.

The jelly that entertained his tongue went through his throat into his stomach.

(Umu. I wonder how they make this.)

He wondered about it every time.

Aleph did not know how to make this jelly confection.

There were various ways to make it besides Kaffa like a mix of various fruit juices and eggs.

It might be similar to how a soup made during the evening from a lot of fishes that was fished from the oasis would solidify by morning when the sun rose.

While thinking such, he took another bite.

(Umu. But well, I can taste this here, so it's okay.)

With his belly filled, he enjoyed the slick texture with his tongue.

There's considerable time to research this anyway, and even if he managed to create this, he couldn't expect to replicate the taste.

He could leave magic to magicians and food to the chefs.

While thinking so, he moved to the next phase of eating.

(Next is this.)

He lifted the small jug of "fresh cream" which was milk with reduced moisture and increased fat.

When he poured the fresh cream onto the jelly, it left white streaks on the jet-black jelly.

(Ok, this is complete.)

He finished pouring all the fresh cream.

Clear black jelly, thick white cream and brown colour from mixing the two.

This state of three mixed colours was the completed form of coffee jelly.

Then he used his spoon to eat the jelly with cream.

(Umu, it's creamier now.)

He was deeply satisfied with the taste.

Coffee jelly was completed by adding thick white cream to the jelly of hardened Kaffa.

The taste of refreshing Kaffa added flavor to the milk, but at the beginning they were completely incompatible and he was able to taste their distinct flavor separately.

At first, he could strongly taste the milk, then the flavor of Kaffa beneath it, and when they're mixed lastly, it became the taste of otherworld café au lait.



It was wonderful for this coffee jelly to exhibit three flavours in just one bite.

(Umu, just cream is enough for coffee jelly. In coffee jelly parfait, there's too many extra

things.)



It was complicated but not too complicated; it was a careful balance between cream and Kaffa.

That was the supreme taste for Aleph.

Aleph ate the coffee jelly steadily to confirm this.

There was no more coffee jelly, so he drank the brown sauce that came when coffee jelly and fresh cream were mixed together, and sighed satisfactorily.

(Umu, I'm satisfied.)

His tongue still remembered the taste of coffee jelly and his belly was full of happiness.

Before such happiness went away, he would go home and sleep.

[Owner! I leave the money on the table!]

While saying so, Aleph got up and placed today's fee.

[Yes, please come again.]

The owner knew what to do and lightly smiled at Aleph.

[Umu, let's meet again in a couple of days.]

Aleph also smiled at the owner and replied.

CHAPTER 75

RICE BURGER



'Chirinchirin', to the sound of bell, the owner who was preparing in the kitchen looked up to the clock.

The time was half past six in the morning. Too early for Aletta's usual time.

[Owner, are you there!?]

Immediately after that, a voice could be heard from the entrance.

It was a voice that the owner had memorized.

It was a young female regular though she didn't come that regularly. It was surely Faldania.

She made an impression due to the fact that he had to make various meals without

using any animal products for her (she seemed to be a member of a race called Elves).

Although she looked like a high school girl at first glance, maybe she was older than she looked since she's an elf.

[Yes, please wait a moment.]

Maa, she's a customer after all.

The owner spoke loudly and headed to the dining room... he looked at the customer that was a bit mysterious.

There were 2 customers at the entrance.

Faldania had blonde hair and long ears of an elf with a bow slung on her shoulder, well, that was normal. The problem was there was an unfamiliar customer just behind her.

She looked the same age as Faldania. Since her ears were long, perhaps this person was also an elf.

She wore ordinary clothes that Aletta usually wore.

Although she tried to hide behind Faldania, she was taller than her so she could still be seen.

[This child is my companion. We would like to eat now, is that okay?]

[Etto, maa. You have to wait for a while, is that fine?]

Looking at the owner's confusion, Faldania inquired and the owner nodded.

[I understand. Also, I entrust the choice of food to you but this girl is also not good with meat, fish, eggs and milk, so please don't use it.]

She told the owner the necessary things and turned back to look at her companion.

[Alice, let's go. Don't worry. The human here is sure of his cooking skill and can make food that we elves can eat deliciously.]

[...Un.]

She took her hand and guided her to a seat.

[Here. For the time being, I brought your lemon water and towels. Please wait for a while. The food I can make for you is limited, is that okay?]

[Ee, I leave it to you.]

She received the cold water and warm cloths.

[I understand. Please wait.]

After saying that, the owner left.

Faldania wiped her hands and looked at the “little girl” in front of her.

Though she was cowardly and anxious, but she saw her looking around with curiosity, she thought that she had picked up someone ridiculous this time.

(I give up. I have no experience as a babysitter.)

Faldania was an only child, which was not uncommon for elves, so she did not know what to do.

Why did this happen yesterday evening?

Alice was wandering through the forest, frightened by the sound of beasts from here and there.

(Why? Why?)

It went round and round her head. She was just 30 years old.

Her father, mother, siblings and other villagers said that she had “weak intellect” and she thought so too, but there were things that she too understood.

(Am I abandoned? What to do, what to do!?)

Looking around the dark forest wrapped in the dark as the night sky showed neither the moon nor the stars, she could not see anything.

Alice did not have the wisdom of not wandering around to conserve energy.

She just wanted to escape from this darkness, she listened with her pointed ears while wondering around the forest and falling over and over.

Alice was born in a small half-elf village at the edge of the Principality.

Owing to its old history and tradition, the Principality had more “replacement

children" than other countries.

Because of that, the number of half-elves that were trampled by the society and gathered together to make a village was also higher than other countries.

The half-elves that gathered together married each other and maintained the villages by producing half-elf children.

Alice was a daughter born from such half-elf parents.

However, Alice was different from other villagers... in a bad way.

When she was born, she had a little more magical power than normal girl. At least that was not a problem, it was even welcomed.

However as the years passed, Alice was found to be "special in a bad way".

Alice was an idiot. Even at the age of twenty, she did not have the wisdom of those that were half of her age. And when she was thirty, she repeated her mistakes like a child.

Alice was clumsy. She was unable to do housework that could be easily done even by girls of 10 or 20 years.

Alice had unbalanced diet. She was not good with milk of a cow that was kept by the villagers and frowned at its smell.

...And when other villagers of her age were already adults and old enough to make children, Alice still continued to live with her parents.

And when an epidemic struck the village and killed half of its inhabitants including her parents, she was discarded.

In this difficult time when they had to rebuild the village, the villagers were unable to feed the useless girl that was unable to do anything.

And now Alice was left behind in the forest and wandered around.

(A, someone!)

However, that action brought good fortune.

Alice's eyes found light in the night forest.

On that evening, Faldania was camping at that forest.

Using the mushrooms she harvested from the forest and the Cobbler's fruit she bought at a town, she simmered a soup with bonfire and added the "miso" she obtained from Chris.



[...Un. I wonder if it's something like this.]

She sipped the soup and was satisfied with its taste, so she turned off the bonfire and called a small light to illuminate her surroundings.

It had been over a year since Faldania departed from her native forest.

The journey made her more or less accustomed to travelling.

(Well... un?)

When she was about to eat her dinner, Faldania's ears heard the rustling of bushes.

[Who? Is anyone there? Come out!]

It was a little too loud for animals of the forest, so Faldania shouted sharply at the direction of the sound while preparing to attack.

[Kyaa!]

A person was surprised by the sound and fell out of the bush when she jumped.

She wore shabby clothes...

(...Why is there a child in such place?)

Faldania who saw the figure tilted her head while decreasing her vigilance.

[Hey, you. Why are you out in such a time? It's not the time for children to be outside.]

She asked while she offered her a hand.

[Etto, today everyone goes out to the forest...]

The girl who badly answered her was a bit taller than Faldania.

(The explanation is unreasonable for her age... is there an elven forest around here?)

While watching such Alice, Faldania had a thought.

Certainly there's no elven forest around here.

If there's one, she would not camp here and ask for lodging there instead.

(When it comes to it...)

[Perhaps you live in a village near here?]

She remembered that there's a rumour of a half-elf village near here that she heard back when she's in the city.

[Un. That's right?]

Faldania blankly looked at the nodding girl while judging the situation.

[Is that so... girl, what's your name?]

[Etto, I, Alice!]

The girl answered cheerfully... Alice.

[I see. Alice-chan... do you want to eat this soup?]

After she replied cheerfully, Alice looked at the soup that Faldania made and her stomach growled. So she asked her.

[Un!]

To Alice who nodded vigorously to that question, Faldania gave her dinner with hard preserved bread.

She couldn't put up with a hungry child.

[...A! This soup, delicious!]

(It really is a terrible thing to do.)

Alice tasted the unknown soup innocently and ate it deliciously... seeing the "elf child", Faldania felt indignant.

Considering the story so far, Faldania had grasped the truth.

(Certainly in human society, there are many "replacement children"...)

True, Alice was a replacement child.

A replacement child. A phenomenon that the "half-elf" was born when human and elf gene intersected each other though usually when they had human and elf parents.

That replacement had another meaning.

When half-elves copulated with each other, the probability of "replacement child" being born was higher than humans and elves.

Usually if there was only one half-elf parent, the child born would be either "human" or "elf".

If the child born was "human", there would be no problem.

Humans became older faster than half-elves... but the time it took for them to become adult was the same.

The child became adult in 15 years, then the child became independent.

In contrast, elven growth was slow.

For elves that lived for a thousand years, it took around 100 years for them to become adult both physically and mentally.

(Perhaps there are no other cases at the half-elf village.)

Elves whose appearance did not change much from their birth to their death were able

to roughly read their age through their magical power.

When Faldania did so, she found that Alice was only a child of 30 years.

Compared to humans or half-elves of similar age, she was really just a child.

And the outside world... in human society, 30 years were considered a long time.

For humans, it was a phenomenal to live for 100 years, and half-elves usually had the life-span of 200 years and it was rare for them to live up to 300 years.

Alice was abandoned... due to their difference in lifespan.

(...Let's talk tomorrow for the time being.)

She saw Alice getting sleepy after she filled her stomach so she gently covered her with a blanket.

The expression was as soft as a mother thinking of her daughter.

The next day.

[Ne~e, wake up. Fal, there's something strange.]

Faldania, who slept after she set up a barrier to repel undeads and monsters, were woken up by Alice.

[N~u, what happened... eh.]

Faldania, who rubbed her eyes after she woke up, saw something familiar.

[...Come to think of it, there's a strangely strong magical power.]

A black door with a picture of a cat.

The magical door had appeared at a place where magical power had accumulated only a few steps from Faldania's sleeping location.

[Nee, what is that?]

[...Maa, it's not a bad thing.]

Faldania said with a smile to reassure Alice who had become uneasy after she saw an unfamiliar thing.

[It's connected to a different world, there's delicious food... eh!?]

After hearing the description halfway, Alice went to open the door without hesitation due to her curiosity, so Faldania chased after her.

'Chirinchirin', the door opened with the bell sound, startling Alice to go inside.

[Owner, are you there!?]

Because it's too early for its business hours, there's nobody inside... Faldania asked sharply while feeling uneasy about the fact that there're no customers or even the waitress.

[...Yes, please wait a moment.]

Fortunately the owner was already there and seemed to be preparing for business.

A voice was heard from the back and the owner showed himself.

Thus, the two elves became customers of otherworld dining hall.

Then, when Faldania finished recalling the events so far, the food arrived.

[Sorry. I have not cooked rice yet so these are made from cold rice.]

Saying that, he placed the food before the two of them.

[It's rice burger with Kinpira Kakiage¹. I don't use eggs for the coating, so don't worry.]



[Fuwa~a...]

Alice exclaimed happily after smelling the food.

Along with brown soup like yesterday's, something pale yellow was sandwiched between two brown boards and placed on a beautiful white stone plate, an unknown dish.

The drifting smell tempted her empty stomach.

[Nee, we can eat this!?]

Spontaneously, Alice asked Faldania.

[...It's probably hot so be careful not to burn your tongue.]

[Un!]

Listening to Faldania whose face was slightly frustrated, Alice began to eat.

After wiping her hands with the warm cloth, she used her hands to lift the food.

As it neared her nose, she smelled a little of that scorched scent, prompting Alice.

She couldn't stand it any longer.

She opened her mouth and took a bite.

(This, delicious!)

At that moment, Alice was surprised with the taste spreading in her mouth.

The first thing she tasted was a flavor like bread with ingredients in it.

A solid, slightly hard skin and the white and soft part of it crumbled in her mouth.

It was hot and had hidden delicious taste, unlike the taste of ordinary bread.

It was sweet, salty and smelled good. It was delicious.

The vivid taste of her first bite was unknown to Alice and was more delicious than anything she had ever eaten.

And the thing sandwiched between the two breads was also delicious.

It contained vivid orange-coloured Caryute and tree root sliced into thin needles.

When she bit it, it was crunchier than the bread and was sweet, salty and slightly spicy.

Together with the bread-like food, they were delicious.

Without noticing it, Alice ate it vigorously.

Faldania calmly tasted the food while thinking that he had done it again.

(...This, is Grilled Onigiri.)



She immediately found out the identity of the bread.

The shape was a round and elegant board, but this was Grilled Onigiri seasoned with shoyu.

The shoyu's saltiness, the umami of ocean scent, and then the slight sweetness of sugar mixed with a little alcohol.

Faldania knew that the aroma and that burnt taste made it a feast on its own.

(I wonder what this Kinpira Kakiage is. It's an unknown dish.)



According to the owner's words, this Kinpira cuisine was made by dissolving flour into water to make its coating, deep-frying it in oil to maintain its shape of Kakiage, which made this cuisine double its time and labour.

(I guess that in Kinpira Kakiage, the vegetable contains its taste and the coating was fried in oil.)

Root vegetables generally soaked in flavor.

So Faldania knew that they were delicious when used in soups or seasoned with rich flavor.

The vegetables were tree root with faint earthy scent and sweet Caryute.

It was seasoned with shoyu and a little sugar and the taste was very satisfying when

the coating was deep-fried in oil.

(...I give up. This, just one is not enough.)

That's what she thought while sipping the miso soup contained the umami of ocean scent, deep-fried tofu, and shredded Oone² (a vegetable that originated from the Western Continent, but it seemed that it had been recently cultivated in the Eastern Continent).



Of course, she reviewed her analysis while she was eating.

And having grasped a brief overview, the food had already disappeared from its plate.

(In the meantime, I still have room in my stomach...)

She raised her face and checked.

It was delicious, but she was not satisfied.

Such a feeling showed on the young girl's face.

[...Owner, I wonder if I can order two more of the same thing? For me and this child.]

[Okay. Please wait a moment, I'll make it now.]

She wryly smiled at the owner's casual words.

(...Maa, I'll forgive him today for this child.)

Faldania obediently ate today's dish of "rice burger".

She ate a meal with company after a long time.

It was a valuable time for Faldania who embarked on her journey alone.

When the sun had completely reached its peak, the two returned to their previous location.

(I have to go to the next town soon...)

While arranging her trip preparation, she glanced at Alice.

She was an abandoned child. Even if she was returned to the village, she wouldn't be happy.

Faldania knew that.

[...If you're interested in making delicious food... would you follow me?]

A younger brethren she met in her travel.

If she took her along, she would be a burden for decades.

But Faldania knew that she couldn't abandon the child.

[...That, rice burger, are you able to make it?]

Whether or not she understood Faldania's words, Alice tilted her head.

[...Perhaps.]

Of course she couldn't. Because she did not know how to make shoyu.

However, Faldania's will of reaching that point someday was overflowing.

[Then, I'll go.]

With her feelings transmitted, Alice gently took Faldania's hand.

[I see. Then, best regards from now on, Alice.]

Faldania accepted it as if it's nothing and prepared to leave.

In the later years, the girl who was regarded as the founder of Elven cuisine and her apprentice.

That was their moment of encounter.

1. Kinpira Kakiage – tempura of thinly cut vegetables (typically burdock).
2. オ一ネ – it read Oone. I don't know what kind of otherworld vegetable this is. Something leafy? Maybe it's spring onion.

CHAPTER 76

RICE BURGER ONCE AGAIN

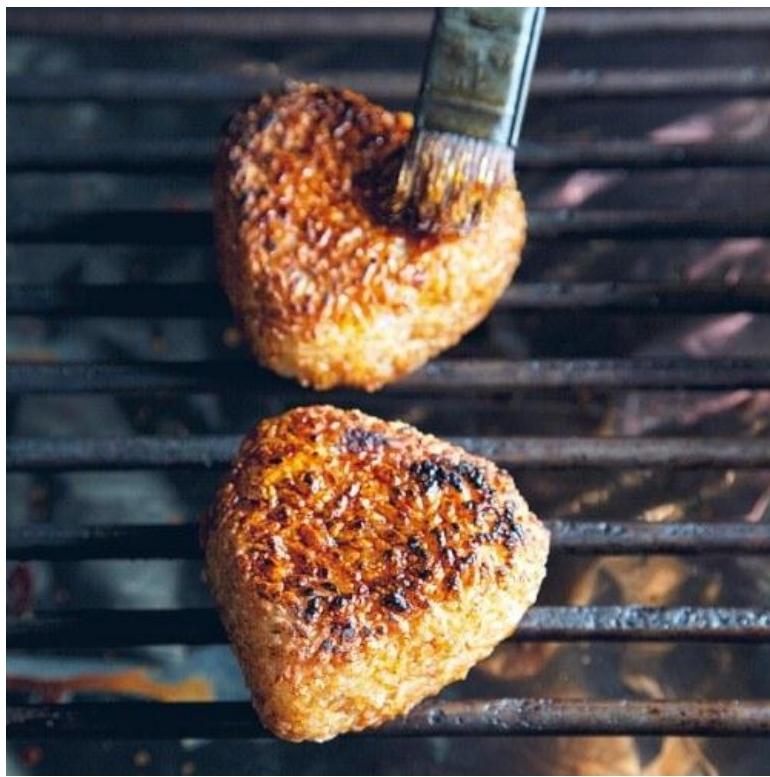


the stack:

- yaki onigiri (grilled rice balls)
- tempura kimchee
- green onions
- fried egg
- kalbi (seasoned shortrib) patty
- cilantro

7.30 in the morning.

After the two elven friends that ate rice burger and bought grilled onigiri as takeaway left the restaurant, the owner was relieved.



(That happened.)

Rice had not been cooked yet for early morning customers. Moreover, they couldn't eat butter rolls.



The owner felt a secret satisfaction after he was able to satisfy such opponents somehow.

(Still, rice burgers?)

The owner complained a little bit after the customers left.

Well, it couldn't be helped that the elves were vegan.

It was not uncommon for people to be unable to eat specific foods due to allergy, religion, culture, and problems of likes and dislikes, but it's still unusual to be asked to make food for those customers.

(Kinpira Burger is also good at first, but rice burger should be with meat after all.)

Therefore, as per the owner's preferences, he thought that rice burger was best with meat dish.

Of course, the Kinpira Kakiage Burger made for those vegan customers was not tasteless.



For the owner who grew up eating his grandfather's cooking from early age and did not have food restrictions, he thought that it was a courtesy to make delicious food for customers.

At the same time however, as a middle-aged man that worked hard, it's still somewhat unsatisfactory.

(It's dangerous. When I thought so, I got the urge to eat it.)

He lightly got angry.

It was literally just a trivial matter, but his stomach became hungry.

(Should I make it? Even though it's morning.)

[Good morning master.]

[Ou, morning. Let's work hard today too. I'll make breakfast for the time being, so please wait a moment.]

'Chirinchirin', he greeted Aletta who came with the sound of bell and reconsidered.

(...Rice burger is for supper.)

The owner's rethought his reasoning seeing Aletta's smile.

Rice burger, which could be said as a lump of meat and rice, was a bit heavy for breakfast.

In addition, Aletta was in the bread faction... rather than that, rice was not usually available in the area where Aletta lived (according to the old samurai regular, rice seemed to be the staple of Western Continent).

Aletta did not complain on eating rice in the morning and ate it deliciously, but she preferred bread.

If so, rice burger for breakfast was a bit far-fetched.

(Yoshi, I'll leave it for free time preparation.)

Thinking that far, the owner proceeded preparing breakfast as usual.

And the day was finished. The customers who were interested in drinking alcohol had gone home and they only had to wait for the usual "last customer".

[Yoshi, I'll make dinner now.]

[Yes!]

Aletta who was secretly looking forward to it nodded vigorously to the owner's words.

The time zone for otherworld dining hall's "employee meals" changed according to the condition of the restaurant's crowdedness.

For customers that came just before noon, no matter their gender, age or even race,

their purpose was the main menu.

Increasing from early afternoon were customers that were interested in desserts like the aristocrats that wore gorgeous clothing, grand priestess that had golden holy seal, and a magician that seemed to be a friend of the owner.

And the customer traffic increased a lot from sunset, customers like the strong warrior Dwarves came to eat dinner with otherworld alcohol (Aletta did not know much about alcohol, but according to regulars, otherworld alcohol was stronger and more delicious).

Depending on the circumstances, there was a huge difference between the time when Nekoya was busy and not busy.

Especially when multiple Halflings came, even when night had fallen, they would be so busy it made their eyes spin.

Because of such circumstances, the time for employee meals changed depending on free time.

Aletta who worked hard on customer service from morning to night basically had empty stomach every meal time, so she always savoured her food whenever it was.

[Please wait a moment. I'll make it now. It's a new product today.]

[Yes!]

Along with his voice, seeing the owner cooking something in the kitchen made Aletta's expectation to rise.

A new product, something that was unknown to Aletta, but she was not worried.

The food that the owner made was always delicious.

Then, she waited for a while.

[Yoshi, it's finished.]

The good-hearted owner carried two plates and placed them before Aletta.

[Waa... such a nice smell...]

While her mouth watered, Aletta said straightforwardly.

A warm and appetizing scent drifted from the food.

There were two brown objects on the white plate.

Something round, flat and dyed brown.

Meanwhile, two different types of meat and vegetable were sandwiched between the two brown boards making hamburgers and both of them smelled delicious.



(Looks like hamburgers but...)

In that way, Aletta remembered a certain dish.

A dish called hamburger in which baked finely minced meat was sandwiched between two breads.

A dish that was regularly ordered by the three boys that had not been seen recently and something that Aletta had eaten as lunch before.

It was a tasty dish, the meat juice fit well with the sour red sauce.



But the foods in front of her were different.

The scent drifting from the food was not the scent of that red vegetable sauce; it was the scent of shoyu.

Besides, the colour of the bread was different from hamburger.

[Ou, it's a special rice burger. It's good especially when it's hot.]

While telling her the name of the dish, the owner sat down across Aletta, put his hands together and said his prayer.

[Itadakimasu.]

As soon as he said that, he grasped the burger without using fork and knife and took a hearty bite.

[...Un, delicious.]

The owner nodded, satisfied with the taste.

At such times, the owner thought that it was convenient to be able to cook what he wanted to eat.

[Etto, God of Demons, thank you for giving me food!]

Seeing the owner eating the rice burger satisfactorily, Aletta said her prayers quicker than usual and ate the rice burger.

She learned from the owner and grabbed the rice burger after wiping her hands with a wet towel.

The scent of baked meat and burnt shoyu tickled her nose, making her stomach growl.

She could not wait any longer.

Aletta also took a hearty bite.

(Delicious!)

At the moment she bit the rice burger, an intense flavor hit her.

The fragrant skin with its savoury and spicy flavor and the meat sandwiched between the two layers.

The two mixed in her mouth and was intensely delicious.

The meat was strongly seasoned.

The fat meat was sweet and spicy and the fragrance of sesame seeds.

Furthermore, the bitterness of green peppers when she chewed.

The sweet Oranie that absorbed plenty of the meat's delicious taste and the fresh leafy vegetable.

The meat alone was too strong, so by wrapping it with fresh and cooked vegetables gave it a finished taste.

(This is... that's right, Karubidon!)



To that taste, Aletta followed her memories and noticed a similar taste.

From time to time, a royal princess (thought Aletta did not know noble etiquettes, her behavior was clearly different from commoners) occasionally visited the restaurant and ordered this meat dish.

(Then the skin portion is rice?)

The taste of baked rice with its savoury shoyu flavor was similar to the meat dish on top of white rice.

For Aletta who was not familiar with rice, this was easier to eat and more delicious.

(What about the other one...?)

Aletta who finished the Karubidon-style rice burger looked at the other one and pondered.

This was closer to the hamburger that Aletta knew.

Although there's no cheese, the baked round meat was definitely Hamburg steak.

And the skin was the same rice as before.

In this restaurant, the demon customer with lizard legs and her human companion ate

Hamburg steak with rice.

Perhaps hamburgers would also match with rice.

(So probably this too...)

It should be delicious.

She saw it with such expectation.

(Eh!? This, it's hamburger and yet not hamburger!?)

But Aletta became confused with her expectation.

It's hamburger, but it's not hamburger.

Yes, that feeling.

She guessed that it's certainly hamburger.

The soft texture disentangling in her mouth was definitely that of a Hamburg steak and the skin was made with rice.

The hidden taste of rice burger was the raw slices of Oranie and its fresh bitterness complimented the sweet "teriyaki" sauce of the hamburger.



[Ou, I tried to mix in chicken cartilage. It's something I ate back when I was a child.]

The owner laughingly taught the curious Aletta.

Usually, the ground meat served in the restaurant was not chicken meat.

Cartilage added crunchy texture.

And using teriyaki sauce as seasoning was a reproduction of the owner's childhood memories.

[Maa, tell me if it's unappetizing... though it seems that I don't need to worry.]

As Aletta did not answer... he was satisfied with the meal to the end.

(Aa, I like to cook and eat after all.)

He confirmed the answer after a long time.

Yes, the owner liked to eat, but he also liked to cook.

[So, how was it?]

The owner asked with a smile after Aletta finished eating.

[Yes! It was very delicious!]

Aletta's face showed no lies.

It was her straightforward opinion, not a flattery.

[I see, do you think I can serve it to the customers?]

[Etto... yes. I think people would want to buy this.]

She considered the owner's next question a bit and nodded.

As a result, she thought that some customers would want to buy this.

[I see. Well then, I'll add this to the menu.]

To Aletta' words, the owner decided to ask other staffs' opinions when weekday came.

The addition of a new menu was common in Nekoya.

At the beginning, it would be served as daily set and if it had good reputation, then it would be added to regular menu.

It was a tradition of Nekoya.

Thus, it was decided that a new menu would be added in Nekoya.

CHAPTER 77

OILED SARDINES



One of the countless islands of Sea Country was an island where dwarves lived.

The island, with an active volcano at its center, had an iron mine instead of rice cultivation, so dwarves settled there and set up their forges, exchanging their products for food and charcoal ever since olden days.

And a dwarven grandmother name Meifan soaked in the island's only hot spring, sighing as the heat of the hot spring soothed the joints of her body that had become painful recently.

[It's soaking in...]

As she murmured, Meifan eyed the slowly setting sun, the sunset the colour of heated iron.

The light showed the mountain hut built near the vicinity of the hot spring.

Meifan watched the sunset from the hot spring as usual.

The hot spring had a strong ability to heal the pain of the body, but it was a bit far from the village for Meifan.

Therefore, it was mostly not popular except for an elderly who had taken time off from work or a sick person who had come to soak.

However, Meifan who already had great grandchildren frequently came to relieve her body pain.

Specifically, she came once in 7 days, soaked in the hot spring until evening and returned home next morning.

[Well, let's go.]

She had heated her body plenty, so Meifan rose from the bath with empty stomach as she had only eaten a porridge she made in the mountain hut's pot for lunch.

She wiped her wrinkled body carefully with a cloth, changed to her regular clothes... and headed to the most enjoyable place of this hot spring.

Yes, this hot spring had a secret.

In the forest, a little away from the spring.

A black door with a cat picture was located at a place where there was only animal path.

Once in 7 days, that's the reason why she visited this place that was near the otherworld dining hall.

Standing on tiptoe with expectation, she grasped the door's brass handle and opened the door.

'Chirinchirin', the door opened to an unexpectedly bright room.

[Ou, welcome.]

At the same time she entered, the owner that was as old as her greeted Meifan.

[For the time being, do you want beer?]

[Aa, please. My throat is parched.]

After nodding to the owner's question, she jumped to sit on a chair that was a bit too tall for a dwarf.

[Fuu, it's cool here.]

The cool wind blowing on her body after a hot bath was comfortable.

It was quiet in the restaurant; there were still a few people like the senior middle-aged samurai drinking sake and the old man eating fried pork with beer.

(Maa, it's going to be terrible if I bring my men.)

Suddenly, her mind thought that there was no benefit in doing so.

All male dwarves were drunkards.

With their loud voices coming out from their small bodies, sweating a lot due to their blacksmith work, ate a lot of food and drank a lot of strong alcohol.

If they came across this restaurant's unexpectedly good alcohol, they would continue to drink until the restaurant's stock ran out.

Because of that, Meifan would keep the secret of this place and enjoy it for the time being.

[Thank you for waiting. Here's your beer.]



While she thought such, her beer came.

The contrast between the white and golden colours seen through the transparent glass was beautiful.

[Aa, thanks.]

She said her thanks and drank at once.

The stimulating and refreshing bitterness of beer wetted her throat.

[Ou, you drink a lot as always.]

In a blink of eye, the glass was empty and the owner who was a non-drinker was impressed every time.

[Maa, that's the case.]

Meifan replied in a good mood after returning the empty glass.

When she came to this restaurant, she had to moisten her throat before eating.

That was Meifan's pleasure once in 7 days.

[Well, what's today accompanying dish for alcohol?]

Soon, Meifan asked the owner.

[It's...]

The owner thought for a while to that question.

[For that request, it's oiled sardine... sardine fishes that's pickled in oil, would you like to eat it?]

He was asked to make it from a new tenant of the restaurant's building, though he was just stocking it for the time being.

Yesterday after tasting it himself, he served it to the tenant and received a good review.

In that case, it may be served for this old woman.

The owner thought so and recommended it.

[Sardine? Maa, I'm used to eating fish because fishery is good. There's no deviation, huh. It's fine. Sorry for that. Also, can I have umeshu for the time being? One bottle if there's one.]

[Aa, just a moment.]

Meifan decided to eat the pickled fish that the owner recommended and at the same time ordered an alcohol that could only be drunk here.

The owner nodded and promptly returned to the kitchen to prepare her orders.

Fortunately, it's a dish that could be served immediately as it's already done.

Without waiting, the dish was served.

[Fu~n. So this dish... fish pickled in oil?]

Meifan inquired.



The fishes served did not have their heads and their guts had been cleaned.

From the lightly browned skin, they seemed to be lightly grilled and shredded Oranie was sprinkled from above.

And near the fishes were something yellowish white, something red and a small bowl with something black.

[Ou, it's homemade. With Tongara... I mean Togaran and Galeo included.]

The owner lightly pointed at the sardines and then pointed at the seasonings next to it.

[And this are its seasonings. Mayonnaise, ketchup and shoyu. It fits both rice and bread, so call me if you want.]

Then, he placed a glass bottle filled with pale yellow liquor, a well-shaped glass cup and a small tub of ice.

[Finally, here's your plum wine.]

[Aa, I appreciate it.]

Looking at the alcohol, Meifan narrowed her eyes.

Umeshu. Meifan's favourite liquor in this restaurant was this sweet and sour alcohol made from pickling otherworld fruit.

[Well then, please enjoy.]

Meifan started to eat quickly while watching the owner lightly bowing his head and returning to the kitchen.

[Well, let's start from the food first.]

She picked up chopsticks and reached for the fish.

(First of all is the taste of the fish itself.)

While thinking so, she picked up the lightly seared body of the fish and the white shredded Oranie.

Its body softly collapsed and a bit remained on the chopsticks.

(Hou, such a nice scent. It seems that he used fine oil.)

Just a fragrant faintly sweet scent drifted from the oiled fish, there's no oil smell.

Despite the oil overflowing in its body, the fact that there's no smell showed that the owner used fine oil.

(Un. I guess that's the way it is.)

With her rising expectation, Meifan brought it to her mouth... she laughed to that taste.

(Hou. This is... soft and delicious.)

The fish was very soft as its finishing touches.

Originally, dwarves ate fishes with their bones, but there's no need to remove the bones as they were no longer there.

Despite that it was a small fish with many bones, she did not feel any discomfort of eating fish bones.

(The bones have been removed... no, that's not it. It's cooked in a way to soften its bones!)

When she rolled it inside her mouth, she noticed that.

There's no bone. The fish was simmered long enough to make the bones so soft they could be eaten.

(I give up... just this alone is enough for a feast.)

Meifan's face loosened to the taste of oiled fish.

Seasonings were salt and Togaran, and also Galeo.

As it's only spicy and salty, she could properly taste this fish's fat.

Every time she chewed, the fat containing fish's umami and the oil used for pickling overflowed in her mouth.

And the Oranie on top... it daringly gave a little crispy texture while being slightly soft as it was cooked very briefly.

At first glance, it was a small fish dish that she could get accustomed normally, but it's not an exaggeration to say that this was a side dish for alcohol.

(I wonder if I can make it myself. This one... it's impossible huh.)

While eating the fishes, she reached for the seasoning while thinking such.

The strong saltiness of shoyu, the sour taste of ketchup and the soft acidity of mayonnaise, it's marvelous.

Meifan knew well of these three seasonings.

She efficiently used them for the oiled sardines.

The salty shoyu complimented the oiled sardines, and indeed it would fit well with rice.

The sourness of ketchup matched the greasy oiled sardines, stimulating her appetite.

And then the mayonnaise. This soft sour taste and oiled sardines were compatible.

The oiled sardines and its seasonings all had strong flavours, but they did not quarrel with each other and fit well.

(Fuu. Well, once I taste this...)

After her belly was filled with oiled sardines, she reached for her umeshu.



She put the large ice blocks in the glass cup and poured the alcohol.

The pale yellow liquor with fruity scent poured from the bottle to the cup, its fragrance drifting faintly around.

While sniffing the smell, Meifan gently drank...

[Hey! This is different!]

She was surprised and called the owner loudly.

Meifan inquired the owner who came running.

[This alcohol, isn't it somehow better than the ones I ordered before?]

Yes, that umeshu was more delicious than the ones she drank before.

The fragrance was more vivid, while it's firmly sweetened, the acidity could be tasted sharply.

This alcoholic beverage became softer and had an overall refreshing taste.

[O, you noticed? I'm surprised. So you noticed that.]

The owner who was not familiar with alcohol was surprised though he was convinced.

(Even though that bar was experiencing recession... that guy.)

He thought of the new shop that just opened recently.

After renting the second floor of Nekoya's building, he started the bar with his retirement money after hearing that the owner made accompanying dishes for alcohol and made an agreement for the delivery system.

He said that he broke his liver after he drank alcohol when he was travelling for his business until he couldn't drink anymore.

He self-stated that he was familiar with alcohol after the 20 years since he entered the company.

After the doctor told him to stop drinking, he opened the bar with the motive of wanting to see people happy after drinking delicious liquors just like the bar he saw in a manga since he still wanted to engage with alcohols even if he couldn't drink anymore.

Apparently, those self-styled details seemed to be genuine.

[Aa, I heard that from someone. I tried changing the supplier. The price doesn't change very much, but I could say that it's delicious.]

[Is that so? I was surprised when the taste improved suddenly.]

After the brief explanation, Meifan was convinced.

(How surprising. Even though the previous one was already delicious enough.)

There's always something above the top, she was reminded.

About five years ago, she was impressed with the deliciousness of the umeshu she drank at this restaurant, so she tried to make it herself.

She washed unripe fruits that were found at the island and pickled them in dwarven alcohol with lots of brown sugar from other island; she then let it sleep for about half a year.

To the men, it was too sweet and its evaluation was not good due to the weak alcohol. But it's popular among women, young people and human merchants that came to buy dwarven merchandise.

Daughters and wives came to Meifan asking her to teach them how to make it. Although she was able to sell it for high price to the human merchants, it still couldn't reach the umeshu sold at this restaurant.

(I'm defeated. It's unlikely that it would be more delicious unless I try harder.)

And that day, Meifan secretly decided that while she drank the more delicious umeshu.

Let's make more delicious umeshu while she's still alive.

While repeatedly making such decision.

[Hey! Another bottle of umeshu!]

Meifan drank more to remember the taste even a bit better.

CHAPTER 78

ICE CREAM



Saturday morning.

The owner pasted it after he printed it out from his personal computer.

[This is it... I wonder if it's correct.]

For the owner, the characters written could only be seen as symbols that the owner couldn't understand so he became uneasy whether the sentence was correct or not.

The “notice” paper was written by a female regular that started to come a few years ago with sharp ears and unchanged face.

In Nekoya, it's a different world version of poetry that told the beginning of summer.

(No, it should be correct. The data title shouldn't be wrong.)

He reconsidered, but it made him a bit uneasy.

Normally it was impossible for the owner to read the words of another world.

He thought that the pattern was similar to the one last year, but he was a bit uneasy as he didn't know whether he was wrong or not.

'Chirinchirin', at that time, Aletta came in.

[Master, good morning.]

[Ou, morning.]

After their usual greeting, Aletta looked at the paper that the owner pasted and tilted her head.

[That, something is starting today, isn't it? ...What is written on it?]

Aletta couldn't read. Therefore when the owner pasted a notice written beautifully, she understood that it was time to serve dishes not ordinarily served or special dishes. Though she didn't know what dishes it would be.

[Aa, this is what it says.]

Maa, maybe this was it. Reconsidering, the owner explained what was written on the paper.

The meaning of it, continuing from early age.

It was past noon and it was the time zone for the customers that were interested in desserts to come.

[Addition of ice cream variety...?]

As a high priestess serving the Goddess of Light, Celestine Flergan, one of the sweet lovers, noticed and read the slogan written in delicate letters that showed high education.

[When you say ice cream, is it the easily melting sweet?]

[Ee. It's a confectionary made using milk. It was sweet and cold.]

[...It's delicious when eaten with pound cake.]



To Celestine's words, the three disciples bound by the love of sweets followed.

[I agree. Certainly it would matches well with pound cake.]

Nodding to her disciple's words, Celestine asked the waitress.

[Excuse me, may I ask for one? It's about the notice written there.]

Celestine asked Aletta who came bearing the menu on behalf of her group.

[Yes. As a matter of fact...]

To that question, Aletta recited the words she heard from the owner.

Every summer, Nekoya increased their ice cream variety from the usual chocolate, vanilla and strawberry.



Due to the hot weather, people would want something cold so this sold well.

When she thought carefully, surely when Aletta just started to work she didn't worry too much, but as the owner said, cold sweets frequently appeared during the hot season.

[So ice creams are added from today.]

While saying so, she showed the menu she received from the owner.

It was a transparent board that listed the ice cream variety, it was used since long before Aletta started to work.

[Maa, there's certainly a lot... e!?]

Celestine read the list and exclaimed in surprise.

[Excuse me, is it true that there's rum raisin ice cream!?]

Yes, she found her favourite flavor among the names listed.

[Yes, everything listed there is available.]

[Well, then I wish to order rum raisin ice cream with pound cake tea set.]

To those words, Celestine smiled and ordered ice cream in addition to her usual.

[Well then me too.]

[I want strawberry yogurt with pound cake tea set.]

[I'd like chocolate chip with pound cake tea set.]

The disciples also ordered additional ice cream according to their tastes.

[Yes, thank you very much. Please wait a moment.]

After receiving the order, Aletta returned to the kitchen.

[Sorry to keep you waiting. Here are your ice creams. Please wait for a while for your pound cake tea set.]

She lined up the flavors in front of them.

[Maa, this...]

Celestine drooled seeing the round yellow ice cream with the familiar dried grapes.



She knew from past experiences that ice cream was made from frozen milk (although they tried to make something similar, it's not even close).

But to think that there's a rum raisin flavor.

With high expectation, she picked up a silver spoon and pierced the round shape.

She brought the spoon to her mouth.

(Aa, it's cold and delicious...)

An ice cream with rich rum raisin taste. A bitter taste of alcoholic beverage and the strong sweet taste of rum raisin spread in her mouth.

The ice cream as cold as winter snow melted on her tongue and conveyed its cold sweetness.

Its coldness was comfortable.

[Un, it's delicious. The sweet and sour taste of strawberry and yogurt are compatible.]



[Chocolate sweets are delicious after all. But if even the Alpheid did not know about this, then there's none at the other side.]



The disciples continued to enjoy their ice cream as Celestine continue to enjoy hers.

[Un. I like this one with alcohol flavor after all.]

Carlotta was a drinker so she enjoyed the flavor of alcohol wrapping around the dried grapes like Celestine.



(I heard that there's a dwarven alcohol in the Western Continent that had dwarven

fruit marinated in it.)

Suddenly, she remembered the stories she heard from a merchant that was also an apostle of Goddess of Light.

About 10 years ago, she heard about a fruit alcohol that the Western dwarves made at an island.

It's not fermented fruit juice, but the alcohol had fruits placed inside strong alcohol with plenty of sugar, it was sweet and easy to drink.

It was said that fruits preserved in alcohol lasted longer and had flavor not found in raw fruits, so the price was higher.

(It might be that a dwarf made something there after tasting it here.)

If she thought about it, the dried grapes found in rum raisin must be fruit marinated in alcohol too, and the fruits marinated in alcohol that the monastery made must be a prototype version.

While eating the rum raisin ice cream, Carlotta thought that the dwarves imitated the liquors here.

[...Un. Sweetness stands out when there's sourness after all.]



While tasting the strawberry yogurt ice cream, Anna was convinced that her choice was not wrong.

Rather than something that's purely sweet, Anna preferred sweetness with acidity.

That's why she chose the strawberry yogurt flavor.

There's yogurt at Anna's world too. It's made from fermented cow's milk which could be eaten with cheese in villages where cows were popular.

This confectionary of ice cream was based on that yogurt. While the strawberries incorporated with the yogurt was firmly sweet, the acidity of yogurt could be clearly tasted. The stripe pattern of pink and white was also beautiful.

The cold sweet and sour ice cream melted in her mouth, leaving fresh aftertaste.

(I want to make these yogurt sweets.)

To that flavor, Anna thought so.

In Anna's world, confectionaries were just sweet unlike the otherworld's confectionaries.

Anna thought that it was possible to replicate it.

[As I thought, this sweet called chocolate is exceptional.]



Julianne enjoyed the chocolate chip with its understated bitter sweetness in her mouth.

The basic vanilla ice cream with fine milk and small fragments of chocolate melted in her mouth and left sweet aftertaste.

(Just sweetness is not enough, but this complexity is wonderful.)

To that flavor, Julianne smiled.

Ice cream's, no, the sweetness of otherworld confections paled compared to the confections known by Julianne who was a noble.

However, the taste produced by intertwining sweetness with other flavours could not be served in her world.

(Anyway, there're no chocolate confections in our world.)

There's no way to obtain the materials for the bittersweet chocolate.

Of course, in order to seriously serve Celestine, Julianne contacted the Alphaid trading company, but it was in vain.

(Katarina said that the material for chocolate is probably Karao beans though...)

Alphaid trading company did not know of Karao beans either.

Next time, she would ask the noble who was probably a high priestess of light.

While thinking such, she enjoyed her chocolate chip ice cream.

And all of them finished their ice cream.

[Thank you for waiting. Here's you pound cake tea set.]

Aletta brought the pound cake with black tea.



[Maa, thank you.]

Celestine accepted with a smile.

Ice cream was delicious, but the mouth cooled down after eating it.

To warm it, warm tea was the best.

Immediately, Celestine drank the tea without adding anything.

[Hou...]

With her cooled mouth being warmed by the tea, she sighed.

Although the way they drank was different, all of her disciples also warmed their mouth with tea.

[...Well, let's eat today's pound cake.]

[[[Okay.]]]

To Celestine's words, her disciples answered and the usual tea ceremony began.

CHAPTER 79

FRIED CHICKEN



After the giant he had crossed swords with for a long time fell, Tatsugorou took a breath after retreating a distance away so as to not being bathed by its blood.

[Whew, it's finally finished.]

A hag. It's a monster with the appearance of an old woman, the swiftness and strength of a beast, and wielding a huge kitchen knife as tall as him that was crusted by the blood of many travelers.

Tatsugorou had successfully defeated the monster that kidnapped and ate children after he was requested to do so by a village in exchange of money.

Tatsugorou murmured while stroking his sore body.

[Fuu. I don't want to get older.]

The pain was not due to injury. Tatsugorou was not senile enough to get hit by an attack to would kill him in one strike.

However when the battle was over, his body that was overworked by the life threatening battle was complaining in pain.

When fighting, his body that obeyed him silently appealed in pain and numbness, so he stopped at the foot of his travel.

[It can't be helped. A few days of slowly curing... no.]

Returning to the inn, Tatsugorou who thought that he would spend a few days resting in the inn noticed it and deepened his smile.

[Tomorrow is Satur's Day.]

And the "door" was surely close to the city as it was only half a day journey from here.

As soon as he remembered that, his joints that were complaining in pain and numbness became silent.

(Yareyare, I need cash for my health.)

With a wry smile, Tatsugorou packed the hag's head into his bag and rushed to the village that gave him the request.

(If I leave now before sunset, I can get ready in a nearby inn. Then tomorrow I can enjoy sake from morning.)

Tatsugorou's steps were light as if he was still young.

The next day.

At the end of previous day, he partook in an early appreciation feast at the village and went to the city. By the time he arrived at Nekoya's door, the sun had nearly reached its peak.

(One month after the last time.)

He remembered that recently he could not go to places where a door was located so his mouth watered.

Yesterday, the villagers' celebration feast before he left was good, but it's still inferior

to otherworld dining hall.

Tatsugorou grasped the door handle with expectation.

(My usual... no.)

He thought that he would order teriyaki chicken with seishu as usual, but he reconsidered.



He would change his attitude a bit today. Thinking that, he looked around.

The season was summer. It was the hottest season though the heat climate was different from his hometown.

Only in such period there was something else he wanted to eat.

Noticing that, Tatsugorou opened the door.

'Chirinchirin', the cool air of air conditioning passed Tatsugorou.

While accepting that wind, Tatsugorou entered the otherworld dining hall.

Aletta greeted Tatsugorou, though she was surprised that a regular that usually came at evening arrived at mid-morning today.

[Welcome. You're very early today.]

[What, it's just a bit.]

While saying such, he firmly sat down and said his order.

[I would like fried chicken today. The one with its bone. I don't need cabbage. And, what did he say... right, with gin and tonic.]

The usual teriyaki chicken and seishu were closed.

As usual, an aged body sometimes wanted to eat food with strong oil flavor.

Especially after a heart pounding intense fight.

[Ye, yes. Please wait a moment.]

Although being a bit startled by Tatsugorou's orders, Aletta nodded.

[Umu. As soon as possible please.]

Tatsugorou suppressed his impatience and lightly urged her.

(I haven't eaten a fried chicken for a long time.)

While waiting, he thought about the fried chicken he's going to eat for the first time in a while.

Due to that thought, his mouth watered.

He waited for a while.

[Thank you for waiting. Here's your fried chicken.]

Aletta brought it.



Fried chicken that was still sizzling and an elongated glass shaped like a cylinder filled

with bubbling liquor.

It's a rare deep-fried food of this restaurant that did not fit with sauce; beside it was just a wedge of lemon.

[Umu, umu.]

He relaxed after inhaling the fragrant scent of the still hot chicken and first drank the gin and tonic.

[Nuuu.]

His voice involuntarily leaked. This drink had a sharp taste that was different from his usual seishu.

Unlike the ale of Eastern Continent, it did not contain bitterness. After striking sharply at his tongue, it flowed down his throat to his stomach.



Drinking alcohol during summer when the sun was still high.

Such a taste would be good.

(Well, let's eat after that.)

After emptying half a glass and quickly asked for another cup, Tatsugorou did not reach for chopsticks, he reached for the fried chicken with his bare hands after wiping them with hot towel.

The heat of fried chicken transmitted to his hand was hot enough to burn.

The chicken wing filled with plenty fat and deep-fried in oil, it told Tatsugorou that it was firmly cooked before he ate it.

This unusual deep-fried food that did not match with any sauce... he bit it.

(Oo... oo!)

The moment his teeth bit down on the crunchy coating seasoned with shoyu and spices, the meat juice leaked into his mouth.

The soft meat of young chicken that had never laid eggs.

The fat and meat juice overflowing from inside the coating mixed with the thin and crispy skin, leaving strong taste in his mouth.

(This is unbearable.)

After sufficiently enjoying the taste, he quickly drank the rest of his gin tonic.

The taste of fried chicken meat and fat was quickly swept away by the sharp taste.

It was a special taste that was different from his usual teriyaki chicken and seishu.

(Well, next...)

After eating a piece, he changed the pace.

The fruit named lemon served with the fried chicken.

He pinched it over the fried chicken.

The strong sour juice fell from the crushed lemon and wetted the fried chicken.

After he spread it uniformly, Tatsugorou picked up another piece of chicken and started to eat again.

(Umu. The second piece has to use lemon.)

It became easier to eat after the sour taste was added to the fried chicken.

As it was, the strong acidity of lemon was inferior to the strong flavor of fried chicken, so it further harmonized and enhanced the chicken.

The first one was meat and its coating without lemon, the second with lemon.

During the occasional times he ate fried chicken, this was his well-established manner.

(Well, let's start the second dish...)

Eventually after finishing the fried chicken with three glasses of gin tonic, Tatsugorou called Aletta again.

[Sorry, I would like a second serving. Fried chicken without bones this time. With rice.]

Yes, this fried chicken went well with rice.

The oily food was extraordinary when eaten with the slightly sweet rice.

(The day is still long. I'll enjoy it for a while.)

While drinking with good mood, Tatsugorou was excited and waited for his food.

He expected the owner would serve it soon.

[Thank you for waiting. Here's your fried chicken with rice.]



Fried chicken cut into pieces to remove its bones and eatable using chopsticks.

Slightly darker brown than before, it was piled on top of mountain of leafy vegetables together with lemon.

Beside that was the usual combination of rice and miso soup.

[Umu umu. This shouldn't be with sake after all.]

Tatsugorou whose appetite did not match with his age picked up chopsticks.

This smaller fried chicken without bones was a different dish.

Tatsugorou left the vegetables alone now and picked up a piece of chicken.

This piece was large enough to be eaten in one or two bites, so he threw it into his mouth and chewed.

Overflowing from it was the greasy meat fat and taste of coating.

While the taste was still in his mouth, he ate the rice.

(Umu! While alcohol is good, rice is also good!)

The slight sweetness of rice sucked in the taste of fried chicken and became another taste entirely.

The taste of thick fried chicken with gin tonic from earlier mixed with the light taste of rice and became even more delicious.

(Oo, this is bad. I'll eat too much...)

In matter of seconds, half a bowl of rice was eaten with one piece of chicken.

Fried chicken was not as good as teriyaki chicken, but it also went well with rice.

He could eat a bowl of rice with just the fragments of fried chicken.

[Excuse me! Another bowl of rice! Gin and tonic too!]

However, Tatsugorou's appetite had swelled up after eating fried chicken.

Alcohol and fried chicken.

This taste which was only second to teriyaki chicken, Tatsugorou was going to enjoy it to his heart's content.

[Fuu, I've completely eaten it.]

After his belly was filled with fried chicken, rice and alcohol, he completed his meal with sweet and sour lemon sherbet.



Tatsugorou was deeply satisfied with the coolness resounding in his head and the peculiar sweet and sour flavor.

[I suppose I take a rest for a while.]

The meal was over but his belly swelled up to the point of bursting, so he didn't want to move for a while.

While this was a dangerous situation in a journey, there's no problem if it's at the restaurant.

[Ou! Owner! We're here! ...N? Something smells nice.]

[What's this? It smells like chicken.]

While Tatsugorou was relaxing, familiar pair of regulars... the ogre couple stronger than unskilled samurais were able to sniff out the scent with their sharp noses.

[Aa, just now someone ordered fried chicken.]

Behind the handmade paper, he dozed off a bit while watching the owner welcoming the couple.

Feeling drowsy at mid-afternoon after drinking alcohol. It was a pleasant time that made Tatsugorou forgot about his daily fatigue.

CHAPTER 80

FRUIT JELLY



The breeze carrying mysterious smell and the large spring before the eyes.

[Fuwaa...]

Alice, an elf born from half-elf parents, could never imagine such a thing and exclaimed in surprise.

[It's been a long time since I saw the ocean, but it's still as large as ever.]

Even Faldania, Alice's mentor and guardian, also remembered the first time she saw the sea 50 years ago when she travelled with her family and smiled.

[Even so, at last, the ocean.]

It's been a year since Faldania left her village. She had went to several places like the Forest Capital where her father's friend lived, the days she spent to secretly spy on things, the half-elf village that sold elf bean stew, the forest where she picked up Alice, and the various human villages and towns.

She had fought demons and sometimes was almost cheated by bad people.

Temporarily interacting with adventurers and worked for employed jobs as an adventurer.

50 years ago when her mother was still alive, her family travelled to this town by the sea in a year, so Faldania thought of visiting that place again.

And an elven child she had picked up on the way, Alice.

Although she wore a robe for human magicians so that she was seen as an adventurer, her face of a 30 years old child from Faldania's point of view could be seen through the mantle (though some men misunderstood that she was Faldania's "older sister"), but she didn't seem able to endure long journey much.

Needless to say, as long as it was a purposeful journey for Faldania, she did not intend to travel slowly, but if her memory was correct, this port town was close to the battlefield where people used to fight with demons for a long time so it used to be deserted until recently, but it seemed to be a peaceful place now.

(Aa, that's why I bring someone with me.)

50 years later, she understood what her father and dead mother thought, and she smiled wryly.

This peacefulness was just right to make Alice who only knew her hometown learn about the world.

She guessed her parents probably thought of that and chose this town to bring 80 years old Faldania to.

[Sa, let's go.]

[Un!]

For such Faldania, Alice clearly answered and directed a bright smile she had recently showed to Faldania.

The “master” that was over 100 years older than Alice, who had helped Alice when she was abandoned after her parents died, brought her far away and quickly becoming Alice’s “beloved onee-chan”.

There was no mistake in what Faldania said.

She believed so and replied with a smile.

As the two entered the town... Faldania realized that her expectation was largely out of place.

The town that she thought was a calm port city was bustling with people.

[Come now and line up! It's the unusual Kaffa that's been brought from far beyond the ocean! This exclusive item is rumored to be His Majesty the emperor of Empire's favourite!]

[Is there any good quality white sugar? Recently a lot of orders came from the temple of light so I would like to purchase that.]

[What is this price!? No matter how good the liquor is, I can buy five umeshu of sea country with this amount!?]

[You don't know? This is a new dwarven alcohol. Rumours said that the eccentric Ein Gard have to hit something with a sword to get this you know?]

[Hee. Even though this is the Empire's only port that used to be a battlefield, it's very crowded.]

[That's right. Recently trade ships come not only from the Sea Country; there are those that came from Sand Country as well.]

[Oi! The onii-chan over there! It's your first time coming here? Then why don't you try this fresh fish skewer!]



[He-y! Try this croquette! The taste is good since I change the oil every 10 days!]



[How about squeezed Margo¹ juice~? It's freshly squeezed~.]



It's full of people, people and people.

From peddlers to merchants to adventurers of suspicious backgrounds to cargo carriages to food stalls.

They promoted their business to the utmost and their voices mixed with the sound of sea waves and echoing sound of people.

[...Do human towns change so much in 50 years?]

Faldania unconsciously held her head due to the unexpected huge difference with the scene in her memory.

What she imagined was a calm and quiet port town.

She was intending to investigate the “sea grass that could be used as seasoning” which was used at the different world, but she also wanted to get out quickly due to the noise.

(I'm in trouble. This is too much for Alice, but there's no helping it.)

She glanced at Alice who was looking around the unfamiliar place and reconsidered.

Unlike when she's travelling alone, she was accompanied with a child now. She shouldn't overdo it.

[Jaa, let's go Alice... eh, Alice!?]

Alice was so impatient that her figure was no longer visible.

Apparently while Faldania was pondering over many things, Alice had left Faldania's side due to her childish curiosity.

[Aa, mou, this is why children is!]

While cursing, she rushed to find Alice.

50 years ago, she herself got lost, but she didn't remember her parents desperately searching for her.

Fortunately, she found Alice soon enough.

She was staring at one of the innumerable stalls.

[Fuwa...]

Alice was looking at something transparent with fruits floating in it placed in red and shiny copper bowls.

It looked like water, but it was something that Alice did not know about as it jiggled when it was touched with a spoon.

[There you are! Alice, I told you before. You can't wander around by yourself.]

After scolding Alice that was looking at something that was being sold at a stall, Faldania also looked at it.

[This, what is it? Is it food?]

A strange food that looked like a slime with fruits floating in it.

It was something that Faldania did not know.

[That's right.]

While smiling at the frank and unreserved elf, the seller told them.

[This is a sweet called fruit jelly. You can try it if you like. An elven onee-san said that it was delicious before.]



The witch of the cape said that it was a hard and incomplete substitute, but she said that it was delicious enough.

After the seller confidently recommended it, Alice and Faldania looked at each other.

[...I see. Then give me two portions please.]

[Thank you for your patronage.]

She thought for a moment and ordered for both of them.

(Hehe, they would be surprised.)

While the seller amiably gave them the fruit jelly, he laughed inwardly.

A special sweet made from magical powder that he and his father learned from an unaging witch that lived at the cape.

It looked like a slime which was a lower monster, but it was tasty.

[Hee, it's quite delicious.]

[Un! This, delicious!]

Fortunately the two elves seemed to agree and smiled when they ate.

The fruit jelly was made from lightly boiling pieces of fruit in white sugar water and fruit juice mixed with magical powder.

The sweet and sour soup that mixed with the fruit juice would later melt in the mouth.

(Anyway, how did the witch know about this...)

While the two elves asked for another serving, the seller was in doubt.

A beautiful witch that had lived for a long time.

This fruit jelly was a whimsy prototype she made years ago and what she taught him to make.

It was not surprising that she knew how to make fruit jelly since nobody knew where she came from but he still doubted why she taught him.

(That person said “recently it increased little by little”... maa, I guess it’s just a whim.)

After all, he wouldn’t know even if he thought about it so he returned to his business.

Whoever that witch was, she was his benefactor.

Just that was enough.

A cape close to the sea, away from the port town.

It had been 60 years since Camilla settled there.

[Fuu.]

Cave built at the cape, connected to the basement of a small house, a cave in which sea water flowed.

Camilla who went to the far bottom of the sea to find various medicine and food ingredients came back with her collected results.

[It’s pretty diverse.]

She had taken seaweed and shellfish, and smiled when she checked her loots such as the fangs of sharks that attacked Camilla at the bottom of the sea.

For her who was a “mermaid” that lived alone far away from her brethren, such a little joy healed her loneliness.

[Blue Goddess that ruled over the water, please give me a blessing. Please give me a pair of legs to stand on land.]

Camilla quickly prayed while holding on her loots.

Her prayer turned her mermaid tail to human legs.

Camilla's beautiful sea blue tail turned into white gentle human legs, not the dragon's legs which were also a strong weapon with nails and steel-like blue scales.

These legs were somewhat weak as a weapon, but it could also be used to pretend as a human at this continent.

Camilla was a member of the great empire built at the bottom of the blue sea and a great priestess who swore faith and unchanging loyalty to the Blue Goddess and was specially awarded and protected by the Blue Empress.

Usually if one became a great priestess, it was their job to represent their tribe as the chief, but Camilla's circumstances were different.

70 years ago, she was the greatest priestess of the blue sea at that time, served as the king, a special life given from the Blue Goddess and assigned to the Northern Continent.

Yes, it was to survey the "Chaos of Myriad Colours" that the demons of that place tried to revive.

In the past tens of thousands of years ago, when the six pillars destroyed the Chaos of Myriad Colours and dominated the world, the six pillars signed 3 oaths.

One, the six pillars would not fight each other.

Two, they would not directly concern themselves with the conflict between their followers.

And last, if the chaos was born once again, they would cooperate with each other and destroy it again no matter the cost...

Even after tens of thousands of years, the six pillars had not forgotten.

Though they had rallied their forces, they only barely managed to destroy it.

That was why when the chaos appeared again 70 years ago, the Blue Empress gave Camilla, who was particularly powerful even among the great priests and priestess that served her, a drop of her blood as protection of eternal longevity, and ordered her a long surveillance duty to determine whether the Chaos would appear again or not.

For the Blue Goddess who led ten thousands of believers, Camilla was demoted to surveillance duty.

Though her family grieved over that, Camilla herself thought that such life was not bad as she could see various things changing rapidly.

Camilla's work had already been mostly finished.

The Chaos that was resurrected by the demons was once again destroyed by the 4 heroes, including the brave one that received strong protection from the Black Goddess.

As the Chaos was destroyed once again, the demons couldn't receive strong protection and had declined.

Now the Northern Continent had been dominated by the humans.

It was a human magician with their secret ritual that gave Camilla "human legs" that they had secretly developed, she then travelled and settled here under the guise of a human magician (as a human, it was not possible for her to proclaim herself as a follower of Blue Goddess) for the last 10 years.

Then after she informed the Blue Goddess, she was ordered again to watch whether the demons would resurrect the Chaos again, so she settled at the edge of the continent in a small town near the sea and decided to live as a witch living at a house connected to the sea that sold medicine made from sea ingredients to the people of the town that she visited occasionally.

Other than following the order of the Blue Goddess, she was also tired of the calm, unchanging life at the bottom of the sea surrounded by the other followers.

The port town had changed considerably since the last 60 years when Camilla first settled.

As life had become more peaceful, trade ships crossing between the two continents

had started to be more popular, the town was now full of new things and human population started to become bigger and bigger.

At the same time, various people settle down there so the once quiet town had become very busy.

It seemed that the Empire, which was expanding rapidly, came and the lord of the town quickly obeyed the Empire and made this town as a territory of the Empire. As the Empire had no other port towns, much money was invested on this place and citizens were sent there to make the town grow bigger.

Camilla had lived while watching over the changes that were very different from those in underwater, not being involved.

It was only 5 years ago she could a little bit change the way she watch over the town.

[Well, it's time to leave.]

After rising from the water and changing her clothes, Camilla looked at the corner of the basement.

A black door suddenly appeared at a corner of Camilla's basement which was saturated with the power of water after she had lived there for many years.

She opened the door.

'Chirinchirin', the sound of bell echoed when the door was opened.

[Welcome.]

It was the female demon with golden hair.

[Ee, can you show me to a seat?]

After glancing at the Black Goddess seating at a corner of the restaurant eating spicy soup (although it was never confirmed as nobody, not even the followers of the Black Goddess, had ever seen her for the past tens of thousands of years), she then asked for a seat.

[Yes, this way please.]

The waitress was accustomed to it and quickly guided her to a vacant seat.

[Thank you. I wish to order chilled fruit jelly.]

While sitting, Camilla ordered the best dessert in this restaurant.

[Yes, please wait a moment.]

Camilla looked around the restaurant when the waitress went to the kitchen.

(...There are many priestesses.)

While Camilla looked like a human magician at first glance, but as a great blue priestess, she was able to combine her strong protection and experience to accurately distinguish Goddesses' servants.

Like the great priestess of white and the lamia priestess of red that were comparable to her, the priest of gold that came from autumn to winter to order Kumara though he's not present now, a priestess of blue that departed from her hometown to the Western Continent, and a priestess of green that started to bring a man recently.

She felt nostalgia seeing those who were born and raised at the Southern Continent.

When she still lived at the country of Blue Goddess, she rarely encountered pagans, but she remembered her hometown now whenever she saw their clothing.

(Maa, I won't go back though.)

They were unaware of Camilla's identity as she was good at concealing her power after many years of experience, not to mention that she had human legs and wore clothes of Northern people.

Camilla slowly observed them and did not dislike the waiting time.

[Thank you for waiting. Here's your order of fruit jelly.]



Then the waitress brought her order.

[Ee, thank you.]

If this was home, the demons were enemies to be defeated, but this was the otherworld.

She received the fruit jelly without particular concern.

[Well then, please enjoy.]

She said that before she went away, Camilla then picked up her spoon.

In front of her was a jelly that looked like a slime filled with colourful squared fruits in a transparent glass cup.

The carefully cooked fruits floating in the thinly coloured jelly were cut into bite sizes.

(It's beautiful as usual.)

There were many sweets in this restaurant, all of them were delicious, but Camilla thought that this transparent jelly was the most beautiful.

Unlike other desserts, this jelly was transparent.

Camilla scooped the jelly with her spoon. The jelly with fruit inside quivered.

She carried it to her mouth.

It was soft like it was melting in her mouth and that slippery smoothness like polished stone slide over Camilla's tongue and down her throat.

What remained afterwards was a cold sweetness, different from ice cream, leaving a refreshing sour aftertaste.

It permeated into Camilla, who was a little annoyed by the summer heat of hot land.

(Un. I still can't make this softness yet.)

After enjoying the smooth sweetness of a single jelly, Camilla thought again.

This jelly was made by boiling fruits in sugar water to make them sweeter than normal fruits.

After eating it for the first time, Camilla figured out how to make it after years of experience.

She knew that it was possible to make something effective in hardening water after washing and stewing seaweeds that were harvested from the sea.

Using it, Camilla created something similar.

It's worth some money at the other side... the replicated jelly was delicious and special enough to be taught to people so that they could make money, but it was still hard and far from the soft and smooth jelly of this restaurant.

How to get this smoothness and softness was still under study.

(The fruits of another world. It's another problem.)

Camilla then tasted the jelly covered fruits.

The orange coloured sweet Michele with low acidity, sweet ripe Margo, green sweet grape reminiscent of an emerald coloured jewel, sweet white peach, yellow fruit that was shaped in half a ring with high acidity, and a red crunchy fruit that was different from berries.

Some were raw and some were boiled in sugar water, a large amount of fruits.

Each fruits that inlaid in the vessel of jelly had different tastes, and they went through her mouth along with the jelly.

Camilla knew some that were similar or nearly the same.

However, all of that sweetness was unusual; they were sweeter and more delicious beyond the fruits that Camilla knew.

Not just because they were boiled in sugar water, the qualities of the fruits themselves were different.

(If these can be obtained over there, the jelly would be more delicious. But this is precious because it can only be eaten here.)

While thinking such, Camilla finished her jelly and gently put down her spoon.

[Fuu...]

She sighed with deep satisfaction.

For Camilla, fruit jelly once in 7 days was more pleasurable than anything.

[Well... excuse me, bill please.]

[Yes.]

She called the owner, paid the price and returned to the basement.

[Well, after today...]

While thinking of her future plans, Camilla went up the stairs.

She did not know yet. After this, two people with long ears... the descendants of former invaders came to visit.

And that encounter brought Camilla to meet new tastes.

1. マルゴー – Marugo, so I translate as Margo. Mango I guess?



PBFF by: traktorA7ZEN